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ABSTRACT

Published in 1915, this book addresses issues and problems of rural life and rural schooling during the early 1900s. Chapters cover: (1) a description of rural life and the role of rural schooling; (2) the rural-to-urban migration trend and resulting effects on rural schools; (3) the real and the ideal rural school; (4) industrial progress and educational improvement; (5) problems of rural schooling, including the need for higher standards, accessible teacher education programs, and higher teacher compensation; (6) consolidation of rural schools; (7) the importance of competent rural teachers; (8) the relationship between strong teacher personalities, a high standard of qualifications, and a higher teacher salary, and the need for more men in the teaching profession; (9) the rural school curriculum; (10) the rural schools' role as the social center of the community; (11) rural school supervision and the role of superintendents; (12) rural leadership and cooperation; (13) the farmer and his home; (14) the rural renaissance; and (15) the advantages of rural life and how rural schools can contribute to this life. Contains a bibliography and an index. (LP)

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RURAL LIFE AND THE RURAL SCHOOL

ED 392 561

BY

JOSEPH KENNEDY

DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION IN THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA

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PREFACE

THIS volume is addressed to the men and women who have at heart the interests of rural life and the rural school. I have tried to avoid deeply speculative theories on the one hand, and distressingly practical details on the other; and have addressed myself chiefly to the intelligent individual everywhere—to the farmer and his wife, to the teachers of rural schools, to the public spirited school boards, individually and collectively, and to the leaders of rural communities and of social centers generally. I have tried to avoid the two extremes which Guizot says are always to be shunned, viz.: that of the "visionary theorist" and that of the "libertine practician." The former is analogous to a blank cartridge, and the latter to the mire of a swamp or the entangled underbrush of a thicket. The legs of one's theories (as Lincoln said of those of a man) should be long enough to reach the earth; and yet they must be free to move upon the solid ground of fact and experience. Details must always be left to the *person* who is to do the work, whether it be that of the teacher, of the farmer, or of the school officer.

I am aware that there is a veritable flood of books on this and kindred topics, now coming from the presses of the country. My sole reasons for the publication of the present volume are the desire to deliver the message which has come to fruition in my mind, and the hope that it

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may reach and interest some who have not been benefited by a better and more systematic treatise on this subject.

By way of credential and justification, I would say that the message of the book has in large measure grown out of my own life and thought; for I was born and brought up in the country, there I received my elementary education, and there I remained till man grown. Practically every kind of work known on the farm was familiar to me, and I have also taught and supervised rural schools. These experiences are regarded as of the highest value, and I revert in memory to them with a satisfaction and affection which words cannot express.

If there should seem to be a note of despair in some of the earlier chapters as to the desired outcome of the problems of rural life and the rural school, it is not intended that such impression shall be complete and final. An attempt is made simply to place the problem and the facts in their true light before the reader. There has been much "palavering" on this subject, as there has been much enforced screaming of the eagle in many of our Fourth of July "orations." I feel that the first requisite is to conceive the problems clearly and in all seriousness.

If these problems are to be solved, true conceptions of *values* must be established in the social mind. Many present conceptions, like those of the *personality* of the teacher, *standards* for teaching, *supervision*, school *equipment*, *salary*, etc., must first be *dis*-established, and then higher and better ones substituted. There will have to be a genuine and intelligent "tackling" of the problems, and not, as has been the case too often, a mere playing with them. There will have to be some real statesmanship

introduced into the present *laissez-faire* spirit, attitude, and methods of American rural life and rural education. The nation in this respect needs a trumpet call to action. There is need of a chorus, loud and long, and if the small voice of the present discussion shall add only a little—however little—to this volume of sound, there will be so much of gain. This is my aim and my hope.

JOSEPH KENNEDY

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA

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RURAL LIFE AND THE RURAL SCHOOL

CHAPTER I

RURAL LIFE

It is only within the past decade that rural life and the rural school have been recognized as genuine problems for the consideration of the American people. Not many years ago, a president of the United States, acting upon his own initiative, appointed a Rural School Commission to investigate country life and to suggest a solution for some of its problems. That Commission itself and its report were both the effect and the cause of an awakening of the public mind upon this most important problem. Within the past few years the cry "Back to the country" has been heard on every hand, and means are now constantly being proposed for reversing the urban trend, or at least for minimizing it.

A Generation Ago.—Rural life, as it existed a quarter of a century or more ago, was extremely severe and indeed to our mind quite repellent. In those days—and no doubt they are so even yet in many places—the conditions were too often forbidding and deterrent.

Otherwise how can we explain the very general tendency among the younger people to move from the country to the city?

Chores and Work.—The country youth, a mere boy in his teens, was, and still is, compelled to rise early in the morning—often at four o'clock—and to go through the round of chores and of work for a long day of twelve to fifteen hours. First, after rising, he had his team to care for, the stables were to be cleaned, cows to be milked, and hogs and calves to be fed.

After the chores were done the boy or the young man had to work all day at manual labor, usually close to the soil; he was allowed about one hour's rest at dinner time; in the evening after a day's hard labor, he had to perform the same round of chores as in the morning so that there was but a short time for play and recreation, if he had any surplus energy left. He usually retired early, for he was fatigued and needed sleep and rest in order to be refreshed for the following day, when he very likely would be required to repeat the same dull round.

Value of Work.—Of course work is a good thing. A moderate and reasonable amount of labor is usually the salvation of any individual. No nation or race has come up from savagery to civilization without the stimulating influence of labor. It is likewise true that no individual can advance from the savagery of childhood to the civilization of adult life except through work of some kind. Work in a reasonable amount is a

blessing and not a curse. It is probably due to this fact that so many men in our history have become distinguished in professional life, in the forum, on the bench, and in the national Congress; in childhood and youth they were inured to habits of work. This kept them from temptation, and endowed them with habits of industry, of concentration, and of purpose. The old adage that "Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do," found little application in the rural life of a quarter of a century ago.

Extremes.—Even with all its unrecognized advantages, the fact remains that farm life has been quite generally uninteresting to the average human being. There are individuals who become so accustomed to hard work that the habit really grows to be pleasant. This, no doubt, often happens. Habit accustoms the individual to accommodate himself to existing conditions, no matter how severe they may be. A very old man who was shocking wheat under the hot sun of a harvest day was once told that it must be hard work for him. He replied, "Yes, but I like it when the bundles are my own." So the few who are interested and accustomed by habit to this kind of life may enjoy it, but to the great majority of people the conditions would be decidedly unattractive.

Yearly Routine.—The yearly routine on the farm used to be about as follows: In early spring, before seeding time had come, all the seed wheat had to be put through the fanning mill. The seed was sown

by hand. A man carried a heavy load of grain upon his back and walked from one end of the field to the other, sowing it broadcast as he went. After the wheat had been sown, plowing for the corn and potatoes was begun and continued. These were all planted by hand, and when they came above ground they were hoed by hand and cultivated repeatedly by walking and holding the plow.

Disliked in Comparison.—All of this work implies, of course, that the person doing it was close to the soil; in fact, he was *in* the soil. He wore, necessarily, old clothes somewhat begrimed by dirt and dust. His shoes or boots were heavy and his step became habitually long and slow. Manual labor too frequently carries with it a neglect of cleanliness. The laborer on the farm necessarily has about him the odor of horses, of cows, and of barns. Such conditions are not bad, but they are nevertheless objectionable, when compared with the neatness and cleanliness of the clerk in the bank or behind the counter. We do not write these words in any spirit of disparagement, but merely from the point of view at which many young people in the country view them. We are trying to face the truth in order to understand the problem to be solved. It is essential to look at the situation squarely and to view it steadily and honestly. Hiding our heads in the sand will not clarify our vision.

Other Hard Jobs.—The next step in the yearly round was haymaking. Frequently, the grass was

cut with scythes. In any event the work of raking, curing, and stacking the hay, or the hauling it and pitching it into the barns was heavy work. There was no hayfork operated by machinery in those days. When not haying, the youth was usually put to summer-fallowing or to breaking new ground, to fencing or splitting rails,—all heavy work. No wonder that he always welcomed a rainy day!

Harvesting.—Then came the wheat-harvest time. Within the memory of the author some of the grain was cut with cradles; later, simple reaping machines of various kinds were used; but with them went the binding, shocking, and stacking, all performed by hand and all arduous pieces of work. These operations were interspersed with plowing and threshing. Then came corn cutting, potato digging, and corn husking.

Threshing.—In those days most of the work around a threshing machine was also done by hand. There was no self-feeding apparatus and no band-cutting device; there was no straw-blower and no measuring and weighing attachments. It usually required about a dozen "hands" to do all the work. These men worked strenuously and usually in dusty places. The only redeeming feature of the business was the opportunity given for social intercourse which accompanied the work. Men, being social by instinct, always work more willingly and more strenuously when others are with them.

Welcome Events.—It is quite natural, as we have said, that under such conditions as these the youth longed for a rainy day. A trip to the city was always a delightful break in the monotony of his life, and a short respite from severe toil. Sunday was usually the only social occasion in rural life. It was always welcome, and the boys, even though tired physically from work during the week, usually played ball, or went swimming, or engaged in other sports on Sunday afternoons. Living in isolation all the week and engaged in hard labor, they instinctively craved companionship and society.

Winter Work.—When the fall work was done, winter came with its own occupations. There were usually about four months of school in the rural district, but even during this season there was much manual labor to be done. Trees were to be cut down and wood was to be chopped, sawed, and split for the coming summer. Land frequently had to be cleared to make new fields; the breaking of colts and of steers constituted part of the sport as well as of the labor of that season of the year.

What the Old Days Lacked.—There was little or no machinery as a factor in the rural life of days gone by. In these modern times, of course, many things have made country life more attractive than formerly. Twenty-five years ago there was no rural delivery, no motor cycle, no automobile; even horses and buggies were somewhat of a luxury, for in the remote country

districts the ox team or "Shanks' mares" formed the usual mode of travel.

The Result.—It is little wonder that under such circumstances discontent arose and that people who by nature are sociable longed to go where life was, in their opinion, more agreeable. Even with all the later conveniences and improvements, the trend city-ward still continues and may continue indefinitely in the future. The American people may as well face the facts as they are. It is difficult if not impossible to make the country as attractive to young people as is the city; and consequently to reverse or even stop the urban trend will be most difficult. Indeed, some of the things which make rural life pleasant, like the automobile, favor this trend, which probably will continue until economic pressure puts on the brakes. Even now, with all our improvements, the social factors in rural life are comparatively small. Here is one of our greatest problems: How to increase the fullness of social life in rural communities so as to make country life and living everywhere more attractive.

The Backward Rural School.—Although the material conditions and facilities for work have improved by reason of various inventions in recent years, the rural school of former days was frequently as good as, if not better in some respects than, the school of to-day. Formerly there were many able men engaged in teaching who could earn as much in the schoolroom as they could earn elsewhere. There were consequently in the rural

schools many strong personalities, both men and women. Since that time new opportunities and callings have developed so rapidly that some of the most capable people have been enticed into other and more profitable callings, and the schools are left in a weakened condition by reason of their absence.

Women's Condition Unrelieved.—With all our improvements and conveniences, the work of women in country communities has been relieved but little. Farm life has always been and still is a hard one for women. It has been, in many instances, a veritable state of slavery; for women in the country have always been compelled to do not only their own proper work, but the work of two or three persons. The working hours for women are even longer than those for men; for breakfast must be prepared for the workmen, and household work must be done after the evening meal is eaten. It is little to be wondered at that women as a rule wish to leave the drudgery of rural life. Under the improved conditions of the present day, with all kinds of machinery, the work of women is lightened least.[1]

The Rural Problem Must Be Met.—I have given a short description of rural life in order to have a setting for the rural school. The school is, without doubt, the center of the rural life problem, and we

[1] There is an illuminating article, entitled "The Farmer and His Wife," by Martha Bensley Bruère in *Good Housekeeping Magazine*, for June, 1914, p. 820.

are face to face with it for a solution of some kind. The problems of both have been too long neglected. Now forced upon our attention, they should receive the thoughtful consideration of all persons interested in the welfare of society. They are difficult of solution, probably the most difficult of all those which our generation has to face. They involve the reduction of the repellent forces in rural life and the increase of such forces and agencies as will be attractive, especially to the young. The great problem is, how can the trend cityward be checked or reversed?

What attractions are possible and feasible in the rural communities? In each there should be some recognized center to provide these various attractions. There should be lectures and debates, plays of a serious character, musical entertainments, and social functions; even the moving picture might be made of great educational value. There is no reason why the people in the country are not entitled to all the satisfying mental food which the people of the city enjoy. These things can be secured, too, if the people will only awake to a realization of their value, and will show their willingness to pay for them. Something cannot be secured for nothing. In the last resort the solution of most problems, as well as the accomplishment of most aims, involves the expenditure of money. Wherever the people of rural communities have come to value the finer educational, cultural, civilizing, and intangible things more than they value money, the

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problem is already being solved. It is certainly a question of values—in aims and means.

Facilities.—Many inventions might be utilized on the farm to better advantage than they are at present. But people live somewhat isolated lives in rural communities and there is not the active comparison or competition that one finds in the city; improvements of all kinds are therefore slower of realization. Values are not forced home by every-day discussion and comparison. People continue to do as they have been accustomed to do, and there are men who own large farms and have large bank accounts who continue to live without the modern improvements, and hence with but few comforts in life. A greater interest in the best things pertaining to country life needs to be awakened, and to this end rural communities should be better organized, socially, economically, and educationally.

CHAPTER II

THE URBAN TREND

In the preceding chapter we discussed those forces at work in rural life which tend to drive people from the farm to the city. It was shown that, on the whole, up to the present at least, farm life has not been as pleasant as it should or could be made. Some aspects of it are uncomfortable, if not painful. Hard manual labor, long hours of toil, and partial isolation from one's fellows usually and generally characterize it. Of course, there are many who by nature or habit, or who by their ingenuity and thrift, have made it serve them, and who therefore have come to love the life of the country; but we are speaking with reference to the average men and women who have not mastered the forces at hand, which can be turned to their service only by thought and thrift.

Cityward.—The trend toward the cities is unmistakable. So alarming has it become that it has aroused the American people to a realization that something must be done to reverse it or at least to minimize it. At the close of the Revolutionary War only three per cent of the total population of our country lived in what could be termed cities. In 1810 only about five

per cent of the whole population was urban; while in 1910 forty-six per cent of our people lived in cities. This means that, relatively, our forces producing raw materials are not keeping pace with the growth and demands of consumption. In some of the older Atlantic states, as one rides through the country, vast areas of uncultivated land meet the view. The people have gone to the city. Large cities absorb smaller ones, and the small towns absorb the inhabitants of the rural districts. Every city and town is making strenuous efforts to build itself up, if need be at the expense of the smaller towns and the rural communities. To "boom" its own city is assumed to be a large and legitimate part of the business of every commercial club. This must mean, of course, that smaller cities and towns and the rural communities suffer accordingly in business, in population, and in life.

Attractive Forces.—The attractive forces of the city are quite as numerous and powerful as the repellent forces of the country. The city is attractive from many points of view. It sets the pace, the standard, the ideals; even the styles of clothing and dress originate there. It is where all sorts of people are seen and met with in large numbers; its varied scenes are always magnetic. Both old and young are attracted by activities of all kinds; the "white way" in every city is a constant bid for numbers. In the city there is always more liveliness if not more life than in the country. Activity is apparent everywhere. Every-

thing *seems* better to the young person from the country; there is more to see and more to hear; the show windows and the display of lighting are a constant lure; there is an endless variety of experiences. Life seems great because it is cosmopolitan and not provincial or local. In any event, it *draws* the youth of the country. Things, they say, are *doing*, and they long to be a part of it all. There is no doubt that the mind and heart are motivated in this way.

Conveniences in Cities.—In the city there are more conveniences than in the country. There are sidewalks and paved streets instead of muddy roads; there are private telephones, and the telegraph is at hand in time of need; there are street cars which afford comfortable and rapid transportation. There are libraries, museums, and art galleries; there are free lectures and entertainments of various kinds; and the churches are larger and more attractive than those in the country. As in the case of teachers, the cities secure their pick of preachers. Doctors are at hand in time of need, and all the professions are centered there. Is it any wonder that people, when they have an opportunity, migrate to the city? There is a social instinct moving the human heart. All people are gregarious. Adults as well as children like to be where others are, and so where some people congregate others tend to do likewise. Country life as at present organized does not afford the best opportunity for the satisfaction of this social instinct. The great variety of social attractions

constitutes the lure of the city—it is the powerful social magnet.

Urbanized Literature.—Most books, magazines, and papers are published in cities, hence most of them have the flavor of city life about them. They are made and written by people who know the city, and the city doings are usually the subject matter of the literary output of the day. Children acquire from these, even in their primary school days, a longing for the city. The idea of seeing and possibly of living in the city becomes "set," and it tends sooner or later to realize itself in act and in life.

City Schools.—The city, as a rule, maintains excellent schools; and the most modern and serviceable buildings for school purposes are found there. Urban people seem willing to tax themselves to a greater extent; and so in the cities will be found comparatively better buildings, better teachers, more and better supervision, more fullness of life in the schools. Usually in the cities the leading and most enterprising men and women are elected to the school board, and the people, as we have said, acquiesce in such taxation as the board deems necessary. Cities endeavor to secure the choice of the output of normal schools, regardless of the demands of rural districts. Every city has a superintendent, and every building a principal; while, in the country, one county superintendent has to supervise a hundred or more schools, situated too, as they are, long distances apart.

City Churches.—Something similar may be said with respect to the churches. In every city there are several, and people can usually go to the church of their choice. In many parts of the country the church is decadent, and in some places it is becoming extinct. Even the automobile contributes its influence against the country church as a rural institution, and in favor of the city; for people who are sufficiently well-to-do often like to take an automobile ride to the city on Sunday.

City Work Preferred.—Workingmen and servant girls also prefer the city. They dislike the long irregular hours of the country; they prefer to work where the hours are regular, where they do not come into such close touch with the soil, and where they do not have to battle with the elements. In the city they work under shelter and in accordance with definite regulations. Hence it is that the problem of securing workingmen and servant girls in the country is every day becoming more and more perplexing.

Retired Farmers.—Farmers themselves, when they have become reasonably well-to-do, frequently retire to the city, either to enjoy life the rest of their days or to educate their children. Individuals are not to be blamed. The lack of equivalent attractions and conveniences in the country is responsible.

Educational Centers.—As yet, it is seldom that good high schools are found in the country. To secure a high school education country people frequently have to avail themselves of the city schools. Many

colleges and universities are located in the cities and, consequently, much of the educational trend is in that direction.

Face the Problem.—The rural problem is a difficult one and we may as well face the situation honestly and earnestly. There has been too much mere oratory on problems of rural life. We have often, ostrich-like, kept our heads under the sand and have not seen or admitted the real conditions, which must be changed if rural life is to become attractive. Say what we will, people will go where their needs are best satisfied and where the attractions are greatest. People cannot be *driven*—they must be attracted and won. If "God made the country and man made the town," God's people must be neglecting to give God's country "such a face and such a mien as to be loved needs only to be seen." Where the element of nature is largest there should be a more truly and deeply attractive life than where the element of art predominates, however alluring that may be. How can country life and the country itself be made to attract?

Educational Value Not Realized.—People generally have never been able to estimate education fairly. The value of lands, horses, and money can easily be measured, for these are tangible things; but education is very difficult of appraisal, for it is intangible. Yet it is true that intangible things are frequently of greater worth than are tangible things. There are men who pay more to a jockey to train their horses

than they are willing to pay to a teacher to train their children. This is because the services of the jockey are more easily reckoned. The effects or results of the horse training are measured by the proceeds in dollars and cents on the racetrack, and so are easily realized; while the growth in education, refinement, and culture on the part of the child is difficult indeed to measure or estimate. And yet how much more valuable it is! The jockey gives the one, the teacher the other.

Wrong Standard in the Social Mind.—In some rural communities the idea exists that a teacher is worth about fifty dollars a month—perhaps not so much. This idea has been encouraged until it has been too generally accepted; and in many places the notion prevails that if a teacher is receiving more than that amount, she is being overpaid, and the school board is accused of extravagance. The rural school problem will never be solved until the standard of compensation is readjusted. There are many persons in the cities, who, for the performance of socially unimportant things, are receiving larger salaries than are usually paid to university professors and college presidents. Thus, the relative values of services are misjudged and the recompense of labor is not properly graded and proportioned. Unless there is, quite generally, a saner perspective in the social mind and until values are reëstimated, the solution of the rural school problem and indeed of many problems of rural life is well-nigh hopeless.

Before a solution is effected sufficient inducement must be held out to more strong persons to come into the rural life and into the rural schools. These persons would and could be leaders of strength among the people.

Rural Organization.—Until recently there has been little or no organization of rural life. Communities have been chaotic, socially, economically, and educationally. Real leaders have been wanting—men and women of strong and winning personality. The rural teacher, if he were a man of power and initiative, often proved to be a real savior and redeemer of social life in his community. But leaders of this type cannot now be secured without a reasonable incentive. Such men will seldom sacrifice themselves for the organization and uplift of a community except for proper compensation. If teachers—or at least the strong ones—were paid two or three times as much as they are to-day, and if the standards were raised accordingly, so as to secure really strong personalities as teachers, country life might be organized in different directions and made so much more attractive than at present, that the urban trend would be arrested or greatly minimized.

Playing with the Problem.—The possibilities of the organization of rural life and rural schools have not yet been realized; as a people we have really played with this problem. It has taken care of itself; it has been allowed to drift. Rural life at present is a kind of easy social adjustment on the basis of the mini-

mum of expense and of exertion toward a solution. We have not realized the value of genuine social, economic, and educational organization with all the activities in these lines which the terms imply. We have not grappled with the problem in an earnest, scientific way; we have never thought out systematically what is needed, and then decided to employ the necessary means to bring about the desired end. It may be that the problem will remain unsolved for generations to come; but if country life and country schools are to be made as attractive and pleasant as city life and city schools, the people will have to face the problem without flinching and use the only means which will bring about the desired result. The problem could be easily solved if the people realized the true value of rural life and of *good* rural schools. Where there is a will there is a way; but where there is no will there is no possible way. Country life can be made fully as pleasant as city life, and the rural schools can be made fully as good as the city schools. Of course some things will be lacking in the country which are found in the city; but, conversely, many things and probably better things will be found in the country than could be found in the city.

CHAPTER III

THE REAL AND THE IDEAL SCHOOL

THIS chapter will have reference to the one-room rural school as it has existed in the past and as it still exists in many places; it will also discuss the rural school as it ought to be. It is assumed that, although consolidation is spreading rapidly, the one-room rural school as an institution will continue to exist for an indefinite time. Under favorable conditions it probably should continue to exist; for, as we shall see, it has many excellent features which are real advantages.

The Building.—The old-fashioned country schoolhouse was in many respects a pitiable object. The "little red schoolhouse" in story and song has been the object of much praise. As an ideal creation it may be deserving of admiration, but this cannot be asserted of it as a reality. The common type was an ordinary box-shaped building without architecture, without a plan, and, as a rule, without care or repair. Frequently it stood for years without being repainted, and in the midst of chaotic and ill-cared-for surroundings. The contract for building it was usually awarded to some carpenter who was also given *carte blanche* to do as he

pleased in regard to its construction, the only provision being that he keep within the amount of money allowed—probably eight hundred or a thousand dollars. The usual result was the plainest kind of building, without conveniences of any kind. If a blackboard were provided in the specifications (which were often oral rather than written), it was perhaps placed in such a position as to be useless. In the course of my experience as county superintendent of schools, I once visited a rural school in which the blackboard began at the height of a man's head and extended to the ceiling, the carpenter probably thinking that its one purpose was to display permanently the teacher's program.

No System of Ventilation.—No system of ventilation was provided in former days, and in some schoolhouses such is the condition to-day. Nevertheless, within the past fifteen years, there has been a gratifying improvement in this direction. It used to be necessary to secure fresh air, if at all, by opening windows. In some sections, where the climate is mild, this is the best method of ventilation; but certainly, in northern latitudes where the winters are long and cold, some system of forced or automatic ventilation should be provided. It may not be amiss to assert that it would be an excellent plan to decide first upon a good system of ventilation and then to build the schoolhouse around it. Without involving great expense there are simple systems of ventilation and heating combined

which are very efficient for such houses. In former times, and in some places even yet, the usual method of heating was by an unjacketed stove which made the pupils who sat nearest it uncomfortably warm, while those in the farther corners were shivering with cold. With new systems of ventilation there is an insulating jacket which equalizes the temperature of the room by heating the fresh air and distributing it evenly.

It is strange how slowly people change their habits and even their opinions. Many are ignorant of the fact that in an unventilated schoolroom each child is breathing over and over again an atmosphere vitiated by the air exhaled from the lungs of every child in the room. The fact that twenty to forty pupils are often housed in poorly-ventilated schools accounts for much sickness and disease among country children. Whatever it is that makes air "fresh," and healthful, that factor is not found under the conditions described. Changes in the temperature and movement of the air are, no doubt, important in securing a healthful physiological reaction, but air contaminated and befouled by bodies and lungs has stupefying effects which cannot be ignored. Frequent change of air is essential.

The Surroundings.—The typical country schoolhouse, as it existed in the past, and as it frequently exists to-day, has not sufficient land to form a good yard and a playground appropriate for its needs. The farmer who sold or donated the small tract of land often plows almost to the very foundation walls.

There are usually no trees near by to afford shelter or to give the place a homelike and attractive appearance. Some trees may have been planted, but owing to neglect they have all died out, and nothing remains but a few dead and unsightly trunks. There is usually no fence around the school yard, and the outbuildings are frequently a disgrace, if not a positive menace to the children's morals. If a choice had to be made it would be better to allow children to grow up in their native liberty and wildness without a school "education" than to have them subjected to mental and moral degradation by the vicious suggestions received in some of these places. Weak teachers have a false modesty in regard to such conditions and school boards are often thoughtless or negligent.

The Interior.—Within the building there is frequently no adequate equipment in the way of apparatus, supplementary reading, or reference books of any kind. There are no decorations on the walls except such as are put there by mischievous children. The whole situation both inside and out brings upon one a feeling of desolation. Men and women who live in reasonably comfortable homes near by allow the school home of their precious children to remain for years unattractive and uninspiring in every particular. Again this is the result of ignorance, thoughtlessness, or negligence—a negligence that comes alarmingly close to guilt.

Small, Dead School.—In many a lone rural school-

house may be found ten to twenty small children; and behind the desk a teacher holding only a second or third grade elementary or county certificate. The whole institution is rather tame and weak, if not dead; it is anything but stimulating (and if education means anything it means stimulation). It is this kind of situation which has led in recent years to a discussion of the rural school as one of the problems most urgently demanding the attention of society.

That Picture and This.—Let us now consider, after looking upon that picture, what the situation ought to be. In the first place, there should be a large school ground, or yard—not less than two acres. The schoolhouse should be properly located in this tract. The ground as a whole should be platted by a landscape architect, or at least by a person of experience and taste. Trees of various kinds should be planted in appropriate places, and groups of shrubbery should help to form an attractive setting. The school grounds should have a serviceable fence and gate and there should be a playground and a school garden.

Architecture of Building.—No school building should be erected that has not first been planned or passed upon by an architect; this is now required by law in some states. A building with handsome appearance and with appropriate appointments is but a trifle, if any, more costly than one that has none. Art of all

kinds is a valuable factor in the education of children and of people generally; and a building, beautiful in construction, is no exception to the rule. Every person is educated by what impresses him. It is only within the last few years that much attention has been given to the necessity of special architecture in schoolhouses.

Men of intelligence sometimes draw up their own plans for a building and then, having become enamored of them, proceed to construct a residence or a schoolhouse along those lines. If they had shown their plans to an architect of experience he would probably have pointed out numerous defects which would have been admitted as soon as observed. Neither the individual nor the district school boards can afford, in justice to themselves and the community they represent, to ignore the wide and varied knowledge of the expert.

Get Expert Opinion.—Expert opinion should govern in the matter of heating and ventilating, in the kind of seating, in the arrangement of blackboards, in the decorations, and in all such technical and professional matters. Every rural school should have a carefully selected library, suited to its needs, including a sufficient number of reference books. The pupils should have textbooks without delay so that no time may be wasted in getting started after the opening of school. The walls should be adorned with a few appropriate and beautiful pictures.

Other Surroundings.—On this school ground there should be a shop of some kind. The resourceful teacher would find a hundred uses for some such center of work. The closets should be so placed and so devised as to be easily supervised. This would prevent them from being moral plague spots, as is too often the case, as we have already said. There should be stables for sheltering horses, if the school is, as it should be, a social center for the community. There should be a flagpole in front of the schoolhouse, from the top of which the stars and stripes should be often unfurled to the breeze.

Number of Pupils.—In this architecturally attractive building, amid beautiful surroundings both inside and out, there should be, in order to have a good rural school, not less than eighteen or twenty pupils. Where there are fewer the school should be consolidated with a neighboring school. Twenty pupils would give an assurance of educational and social life, instead of the dead monotony which often prevails in the smaller rural school. There should be, during the year, at least eight, and preferably nine, months of school work.

It Will Not Teach Alone.—But with all of these conditions the school may still be far from effective. All the material equipment—the total environment of the pupils, both inside and outside the building—may be excellent, and still we may fail to find there a good school. Garfield said of his old teacher that Mark Hopkins on one end of a log and a pupil on the other

made the best kind of college. This indicates an essential factor other than the physical equipment.

I remember being once in a store when a man who had bought a saw a few days previously returned it in a wrathful mood. He was angry through and through and declared that the saw was utterly worthless. He had brought it back to reclaim his money. The merchant had a rich vein of humor in his nature and he listened smilingly to the outburst of angry language. Then he merely took the saw, opened his till and handed the man his money, quietly asking, with a twinkle in his eyes for those standing around, "Wouldn't it saw alone?"

Now, we may have a fine school ground, or site, with a variety of beautiful trees and clumps of shrubbery; we may have a playground and a school garden; we may have it all splendidly fenced; the schoolhouse may have an artistic appearance and may be kept in excellent repair; it may be well furnished inside with blackboards, seats, library, reference books, good textbooks, and all else that is needed; it may be beautifully decorated; it may have twenty or even more pupils, and yet we may not have a good school. It will not "saw alone"; the one indispensable factor may still be lacking.

The Teacher.—"As is the teacher, so is the school." Mark Hopkins on the end of a log made a good college, compared with the situation where the building is good and the teacher poor. The teacher is like the

mainspring in a watch. Without a good teacher there can be no good school. Live teacher, live school; dead teacher, dead school. The teacher and the school must be the center of life, of thought, and of conversation, in a good way, in the neighborhood. The teacher is the soul of the school; the other things constitute its body. What shall it profit a community to have a great building and lack a good teacher?

If we were obliged to choose between a good teacher and poor material conditions and environment on the one hand, and excellent material conditions and environment and a poor teacher on the other, we should certainly not hesitate in our choice.

A Good Rural School.—Now, if we suppose a really good teacher under the good conditions described above, we shall have a *good* rural school. There is usually better individual work done in such a school than is possible in a large system of graded schools in a city. In such a school there is more single-mindedness on the part of pupils and teacher. These pupils bring to such a school unspoiled minds, minds not weakened by the attractions and distractions, both day and night, of city life. In such a school the essentials of a good education are, as a rule, more often emphasized than in the city. There is probably a truer perspective of values. Things of the first magnitude are distinguished from things of the second, fifth, or tenth magnitude. This inability to distinguish magnitudes is one of the banes of common school

education everywhere—so many things are appraised at the same value.

The Problem.—We have tried in this discussion to put before the reader a fairly accurate picture, on the one hand, of the undesirable conditions which have too often prevailed, and, on the other, of a rural school which would be an excellent place in which to receive one's elementary education. The reader is asked to "look here, upon this picture, and on this." The transition from the one to the other is one of the great problems of rural life and of the rural school. Consolidation of schools, which we shall discuss more at length in a later chapter, will help to solve the problem of the rural school, and we give it our hearty indorsement. It is the best plan we know of where the conditions are favorable; but it is probable that the one-room rural school will remain with us for a long time to come. Indeed there are some good reasons why it should remain. Where the good rural school exists, whether non-consolidated or consolidated, it should be the center and the soul of rural life in that community—social, economical, and educational.

CHAPTER IV

SOME LINES OF PROGRESS

Progress.—The period covering the last sixty or seventy-five years has seen greater progress in all material lines than any other equal period of the world's history. Indeed, it is doubtful if a similar period of invention and progress will ever recur. It has been one of industrial revolution in all lines of activity.

In Reaping Machines.—Let us for a few moments trace this development and progress in some specific fields. Within the memory of many men now living the hand sickle was in common use in the cutting of grain. In the fifties and sixties the cradle was the usual implement for harvesting wheat, oats, and similar grains. One man did the cradling and another the gathering and the binding into sheaves. Then came rapid development of the reaping machine.

The "Dropper."—The most important step was probably the invention of the sickle-bar, a slender steel bar having V-shaped sections attached, to cut the grass and grain; this was pushed and pulled between what are called guards, by means of a rod called the "Pitman rod," attached to a small revolving wheel run by the gearing of the machine. This was a won-

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derful invention and its principle has been extensively applied. The first reaping machine using the sickle and guard device was known as the "dropper." A reel, worked by machinery, revolved at a short distance above the sickle, beating the wheat backward upon a small platform of slats. This platform could be raised and lowered by the foot, by means of a treadle. When there was sufficient grain on this slat-platform it was lowered and the wheat was left lying in short rows on the ground, behind the machine. The bundles had to be bound by hand and removed before the machine could make the next round. This machine, though simple, was the forerunner of other important inventions.

The Hand Rake.—The next type of machine was the one in which the platform of slats was replaced by a stationary platform having a smooth board floor. A man sat at the side of the machine, near the rear, and raked the bundles off sidewise with a hand rake. A boy drove the team and the man raked off the grain in sufficient quantities to make bundles. These were thrown by the rake a sufficient distance from the standing grain to allow the machine to proceed round and round the field, even if these bundles of grain, so raked off, were not yet bound into sheaves.

The Self Rake.—The next advance consisted in what is known as the "self rake." This machine had a series of slats or wings which did both the work of the reel in the earlier machine and also that of the

man who raked the wheat off the later machine. This saved the labor of one man.

The Harvester.—The next improvement in the evolution of the reaping machine—if indeed an improvement it could be called—was what is known as the "harvester." In this there was a canvas elevator upon which the grain was thrown by the reel, and which brought the grain up to the platform on which two men stood for the purpose of binding it. Each man took his share, binding alternate bundles and throwing them, when bound, down on the ground. Such work was certainly one of the repellent factors in driving men and boys from the country to the city.

The Wire Binder.—Another step in advance was the invention of the wire binder. Everything was now done by machinery: the cutting, the elevating, the binding, and even the carrying of the sheaves into piles or windrows. There was an attachment upon the machine by which the bundles were carried along and deposited in bunches to make the "shocking" easier.

The Twine Binder.—But the wire was found to be an obstruction both in threshing and in the use of straw for fodder; and, as necessity is the mother of invention, the so-called twine "knotter" soon came into existence and with it the full-fledged twine binder with all its varied improvements as we have it to-day.

Threshing Machine.—The development of the perfected threshing machine was very similar. Fifty years

ago, the flail was an implement of common use upon the barn floor. Then came the invention called the "cylinder"; this was systematically studded with "teeth" and these, in the rapid revolutions of the cylinder, passed between corresponding teeth systematically set in what is known as "concaves." This tooth arrangement in revolving cylinder and in concave was as epochal in the line of progress in threshing machines as the sickle, with its "sections" passing or being drawn through guards, was in reaping machines.

The First Machine.—The earliest of these threshing machines containing a cylinder was run by a treadmill on which a horse was used. It was literally a "one-horse" affair. Of course the first type of cylinder was small and simple, and the work as a rule was poorly done. The chaff and the straw came out together and men had to attend to each by hand. The wheat was poorly cleaned and had to be run through a fanning-mill several times.

Improvements.—Then came some improvements and enlargements in the cylinder, and also the application of horse power by means of what was known as "tumbling rods" and a gearing attached to the cylinder. All this at first was on rather a small scale, only two, three, or four horses being used. But improvements and enlargements came step by step, until the ten and twelve horse power machine was achieved, resulting in the large separator that would thresh out several hundred bushels of wheat in a day. The

separator had also attached to it what was called the "straw carrier," which conveyed both the straw and the chaff to quite a distance from the machine. But even then most of the work around the machine was done by hand. The straw pile required the attention of three or four men; or if the straw were "bucked," as they said, it required a man with a horse or team hitched to a long pole. In this latter case the straw was spread in various parts of the field and finally burned.

The Steam Engine.—Then came the portable steam engine for threshing purposes. At first, however, this had to be drawn from place to place by teams. The power was applied to the separator by a long belt. Following this, came the devices for cutting the bands, the self-feeder, and finally the straw blower, as it is called, consisting of a long tube through which the straw is blown by the powerful separator fanning-mill. This blower can be moved in different directions, and consequently it saves the labor of as many men as were formerly required to handle the straw and chaff. About the same time, also, the device for weighing and measuring the grain was perfected. The "traction" engine has now replaced the one which had to be drawn by teams, and this not only propels itself but also draws the separator and other loads after it from place to place. In all this progress the machinery has constantly become more and more perfect and the cylinder and capacity of the machine greater and greater.

Not many years ago, six hundred bushels in a day was considered a big record in the threshing of wheat. Now the large machines separate, or thresh out, between three and four thousand bushels in one day. Such has been the development in reaping machines from the sickle to the self-binder, and in threshing machines from the flail to the modern marvel just described.

Improvement in Ocean Travel.—A similar story may be told in regard to ocean traffic and ocean travel. Our ancestors came from foreign lands on sailing ships that required from three weeks to several months to cross the Atlantic. I am acquainted with a German immigrant who, many years ago, left a seaport town of Germany on January 1st and landed at Castle Garden in New York City on the 4th of July. The inconvenience of travel under such circumstances was equal to the slowness of the journey. In those days leaving home in the old country meant never again seeing one's relatives and friends. If such conditions are compared with those of to-day we can readily realize the vast progress that has been made. To-day the great ocean liners cross the Atlantic in a little more than five days. These magnificent "ocean greyhounds" are fitted out with all modern conveniences and improvements, so that one is as comfortable in them and as safe as he is in one of the best hotels of the large cities.

From Hand-spinning to Factory.—Weaving in for-

mer times was done entirely by hand. Fifty years ago private weavers were found in almost every community. Wool was raised, carded, spun, and woven, and the garments were all made, practically, within the household. All that is now past. In the great manufacturing establishments one man at a lever does the work of 250 or 500 people. This great industrial advancement has taken place within the memory of people now living. And similar progress has been made in almost every other line of human endeavor.

The Cost.—Very few people realize what it has cost the human race to pass from one condition to the other in these various lines. Hundreds and thousands of men have worked and died in the struggle and in the process of bringing about improvements. Every calamity due to inadequate machines or to poor methods has had its influence toward causing further advancements in inventions for the benefit of mankind.

Progress in Higher Education.—Let us now turn our attention to the progress that has been made in the field of academic education. It is true that many of the great universities were established centuries ago. These were at first endowed church institutions or theological seminaries; but the great state universities of this country are creations of the progressive period under consideration. General taxation for higher education is comparatively a modern practice. The University of Michigan was one of the first state universities established. Since then nearly

every commonwealth, whether it has come into the Union since that time or whether it is one of the older states, has established a university. There has been a great development of higher education by the states. No institutions of the country have grown more rapidly within the last thirty or forty years than the state universities. They have established departments of every kind. Besides the college of liberal arts there are in most of them colleges or schools of law, medicine, engineering in its several lines, education, pharmacy, dentistry, commerce, industrial arts, and fine arts. The state university is abroad in the land; it has, as a rule, an extension department by which it impresses itself upon the people of the state, outside its walls. The principle of higher education by taxation of all the people is no longer questioned; it is no longer an experiment. The state university is relied upon to furnish the country with the leaders of the future—and leaders will always be in demand, for they are always sorely needed.

Progress in Normal Schools.—While the state universities have been enjoying this marvelous development, nearly every state has been establishing normal schools for the professional preparation of teachers. The normal school as an institution is also modern. As an institution established and supported by state taxation it is, as a rule, more recent than the universities. Forty years ago many good people regarded the normal school idea as visionary and its reali-

zation as a doubtful experiment. Indeed in one western state, as late as the eighties, its legislature debated the abolition of its normal schools on the ground that they were not fulfilling or accomplishing any useful mission. To-day, however, no such charge of inefficiency can be made. The normal schools, like the universities, have proved their right to exist. They have been weighed in the balance and have not been found wanting. It is now generally recognized that those who would teach should make some preparation for that high calling; and so the normal schools in every state have demonstrated their "right of domicile" in the educational system. It is now generally recognized that teaching, both as a science and as an art, is highly complicated, and that, if it is to be a profession, there must be special preparation for it. Consequently the normal schools of the country have had a wonderful and rapid development from the experimental stage to that in which they have well-nigh realized their ideals. School boards everywhere look to the normal schools for their supply of elementary teachers.

Progress in Agricultural Colleges.—Similar statements may be made concerning the agricultural colleges of the country. They are modern creations in the United States; and with the aid of both the state and the national government they have come to be vast institutions, devoting themselves to the teaching and the spreading of scientific farming among the people. Here there is a vast work to be done. On

account of the trend of population toward the cities, and on account of the vast tracts of country land lying idle, scientific agriculture should be brought in to aid in production and thus to keep down the cost of living. The agricultural colleges of the country have a large part to play in the solution of the problems of rural life.

Progress in the High Schools.—A similar development characterizes the high schools of the country. Education has extended downward from above. Universities everywhere have come into existence before the establishment of secondary schools. Not only are the universities, the normal schools, and the agricultural colleges of recent origin, but the high schools also are modern institutions, at least in their present systematized form. The high schools of the cities constitute to-day one of the most efficient forms of school organization. At the present time the better high schools of the cities are veritable colleges—in fact their curricula are as extensive as were those of the colleges of sixty years ago. Vast numbers attend them; their faculties are composed of college graduates or better; they have, as a rule, various departments, such as manual training, domestic science, agriculture, commercial subjects, normal courses, etc. In addition to the traditional curricula, the high schools, like the universities, normal schools, and agricultural colleges, have kept pace, in large measure, with the material progress described in the first part of this chapter.

How Is the Rural School?—We have described the

progress that has been made in various fields of the industrial world and also in several kinds of educational institutions. At this point the question may, with propriety, be asked whether the rural schools have generally kept pace in their progress with the other and higher institutions which we have mentioned. We believe that they have not. The rural schools have too often been the last to attract public interest and to receive the attention which their importance deserves.

Not long ago I had occasion to visit a teacher's institute in a northwestern state, in which there were enrolled 350 teachers. Some of these were college graduates and many of them were normal school graduates from various states. One had only to conduct a round table in order to experience a very spirited reaction. Colonel Homer B. Sprague, who was once president of the University of North Dakota, used to say that it always wrenched him to kick at nothing. There would be no danger, in such a body of teachers as I have referred to, of wrenching oneself. I have had occasion many times every year to meet these western teachers in local associations, in teachers' institutes, and in state conventions; and from my observations and experience I can truthfully state that they are fully as responsive and as progressive as the teachers in other parts of the country.

Rural Schools no Better than Formerly.—Notwithstanding all this, it is probably true that the rural schools of to-day are, on the whole, but little better than those of twenty years ago. About that time I served four years as county superintendent of schools in a western state. As I recall the condition of the schools of that day I feel sure that there has been but little real progress. Indeed, for reasons which will be stated later on, it can be safely asserted that in some parts of the country there has been a deterioration.

About thirty years ago I had the experience of teaching rural schools for several terms. Being ac-

quainted with my coworkers, I met them frequently in teachers' gatherings and in conventions of various kinds. If my memory is to be trusted I can again affirm that the teachers of those days do not compare unfavorably with the rural school teachers of the present time. And if the teacher is the measure of the school, the same may be said of the schools.

Nor is this all. About forty years ago I was attending a rural school myself. I received all of my elementary education in such schools and I am convinced that many of my teachers were stronger personalities than the teachers of to-day.

Some Improvement.—It is not intended here to assert or to convey the impression that there has been no progress in any direction in the rural schools. It is the personnel of the country school—the strength and power of initiative in the teachers of that day—that is here referred to. Although there has been some progress in many lines it has not been in the direction of stronger teachers. The textbooks in use to-day in various branches are decidedly superior to those used in former days, although some of these older books were by no means without their points of strength and excellence. Indeed, I sometimes think that textbooks are often rendered less efficient by being refined upon in a variety of ways to conform to the popular pedagogical ideas of the day.

It is no doubt true also that there has been, in the last thirty or forty years, much discussion along the

lines of psychology and pedagogy and the methods of teaching the various branches. The professional spirit has been in the air, and there has been much writing and much talking on the science and art of teaching. But it must be confessed that, while this is desirable and in fact indispensable, much of it may be little more than a mere whitewash; much of it is simply parrot-like imitation; much of it is only "words, words, words." Far be it from me to underestimate the value of this professional and pedagogical phase of the teacher's equipment. Nevertheless, when all is said and duly considered, it is personality that is the greatest factor in the teacher. A good, sound knowledge of the subjects to be taught comes next; and last, though probably not least, should come the professional preparation and training. Without the first two requisites, however, this last is worth little. It is a lamentable fact that, in almost every section of our country, there are persons engaged in teaching rural schools, who are not only deficient in personal power but whose academic education is not such as to afford an adequate foundation for professional training.

Strong Personalities in the Older Schools.—As an example of strong personalities I remember one teacher who in middle life was recognized as a leader in his community; another one, after serving an apprenticeship in the country schools, became a prominent and successful physician; a third became a leading architect; a fourth, a lawyer; a fifth went west and

became county judge in the state of his adoption; a sixth entered West Point Military Academy and rose rapidly in the United States army. These instances are given to show that many of the old-time country teachers were men of force and initiative. They became to their pupils ideals of manhood worthy to be patterned after. These all taught in one neighborhood, but similar strong characters were no doubt engaged in the schools of surrounding neighborhoods. What rural school of to-day in any state can boast of the uplifting presence of so many men teaching in one decade?

A. V. Storm, of the Minnesota Agricultural College, says:

"But we lack one thing nowadays that these old schools possessed. Twenty or thirty years ago the country schools were taught for the most part by men. Such men as Shaw and Dolliver, and a great many other leading men of to-day, were at one time country school teachers. They exercised a great influence upon the pupils. They were the angels who put the coals of fire upon the lips of the young men, giving them the ambition that made for future greatness. The country schools now are not so good as they were twenty years ago. The chief reason is that their teachers are not so capable."

More Men Needed.—To secure the best results, there should be fully as many men as women teaching in the rural schools. One hundred years ago both city and country schools were taught by men alone. Now

the rural schools and most of the city schools are taught by women alone. There is probably as much reason against all teachers being women as there is against all teachers being men.

Low Standard Now.—Thirty or forty years ago about half of the teachers were men and half women, both sexes representing the strong and the weak. Very many of the schools of to-day are under the charge of young girls from eighteen to twenty years of age who have had little more than a common elementary education. Some have just finished the eighth grade and have had a smattering of pedagogy or what is sometimes called "the theory and practice of teaching." This they could have secured in a six weeks' summer school, while reviewing the so-called "common branches." These teachers are holders merely of a second grade elementary, or county, certificate, which requires very little education. Almost any person who has taken the required course in reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, grammar, geography, history, and hygiene of the elementary school can pass the usual examination and obtain a certificate to teach. In some states the matter is made still easier by the issuing of third grade county certificates, and even, in some cases, by the giving of special permits Indeed, the standards are usually so low that the supply of teachers is far beyond the demand.

The Survival of the Unfittest.—Such is the standard which prevails extensively throughout the country in

respect to the qualifications of rural school teachers. As inferior goods sometimes drive out the better in the markets, so poor teachers holding the lowest grade of certificate will sometimes drive out the better, for they are ready to teach for "less than anybody else." The men and women of strength and initiative are constantly tempted to go out of the calling into other lines of work where progress is more pronounced and where salaries or wages are higher; and so the doors of the teachers' calling swing outward. The good teachers will desert us, or refuse to come, and the rural schools will be left with what might be called the survival of the unfittest.

Short Terms.—Add to the foregoing considerations the short terms of service which prevail in rural schools and we have indeed a pitiable condition. The average yearly duration of such schools in most states is about seven months—sometimes less. This leaves about five months of vacation, or of time between terms, when much that has been learned is forgotten. Under such conditions how is it possible to give the children of these communities an education which is at all comparable to that afforded by the city?

Poor Supervision.—Then, again, there is often little supervision of country schools. When a county superintendent has under his inspection from fifty to two hundred schools, it is utterly impossible for him to give to each the desired number of visits or to supervise and superintend the work of those schools in a manner

that can be called adequate in any true sense. Sometimes he can visit each school only once a year, or twice at most, and, even then, there may be two different teachers in the same school during the year; so that he sees each of his teachers at work probably only once. What can a supervising officer do for a school or for a teacher under such circumstances? Practically nothing. The county superintendent is usually elected to office by the people and frequently on a partisan ticket. This method of choosing naturally tends to make him give more attention to politics than he otherwise would think of giving. So the supervision or superintendency of country schools is too often slighted or neglected—and who is to blame? Of course there are many exceptional cases, but the exceptions only prove the rule.

No Decided Movement.—The whole movement of the rural school, whether it has been backward or forward, has been too frequently without definite or pronounced direction. It has moved along the line of least resistance, sometimes this way, sometimes that, in some places forward, in other places backward. Time, circumstances, and chance determine the work. School problems have been settled by convenience and circumstances. The whole situation has been one of *laissez faire*. It is only within the past few years that people have become awakened to the situation. They are beginning to be impressed with the progress that is being made in all other lines, not only outside of the

schools but also in the fields of higher and secondary education. The rural school interests have at last begun to ask, "Where do we come in?"

Elementary Teaching Not a Profession.—There has been as yet no real profession of teaching in the rural or elementary field. In about one third of the schools there is a new teacher every year; so that every three years the teaching force in any given county is practically renewed. A *profession* cannot be acquired in a day, or even in twelve months. The work to be done is regarded as an important public work, and the public is concerned in its own protection. Hence in every true profession there is a somewhat lengthy period of preparation and a standard of acquirements which must be attained. In other words, a true profession is a closed calling which it is impossible for everyone to join, and which only those can enter who have passed through a severe preparation and have successfully met the required standard. School teaching in the country is too frequently not a profession. It can be entered too easily; the required period of preparation is so short and the standard is placed so low that young and poorly prepared persons enter too easily.

The Problem Difficult, but Before Us.—What shall be done? The problem is before the American people in every state of the Union. The people themselves have become aroused to the situation, and this itself is encouraging. Much has been done in some states, but much will be left undone for the attention of

coming generations. The masses of the people can be aroused only with difficulty. The education of an individual is a slow process. The education of a family, of a community, or of a state is slower still. The education of a nation or of a race is so slow that its progress is difficult of measurement. Indeed, the movement of the race as a whole is so imperceptible that it leaves room for debate as to whether humanity is going forward or backward.

Other Educational Interests Should Help.—The higher institutions, including the state universities, the agricultural colleges, the normal schools, and the high schools, should all join hands in helping to remedy conditions. Society has already, in large measure, solved the problems in the higher educational fields; those institutions have been advanced to such an extent that they have almost realized their ideals. The rural population has helped them to attain to these high standards. As one good turn deserves another, rural communities now look to these interests for aid in the struggle to overcome the difficulties which confront them.

Higher Standards Necessary.—But before the rural schools can ever hope to make the desired progress, higher standards must be set by society, and the teachers in those schools must attain to them. The United States, as a nation, is far behind foreign countries in setting such a standard. In Denmark and elsewhere a country school teacher must be a normal school

graduate. A few national laws in the way of standardization both in higher and lower education would produce excellent results. The old fear of encroachment upon state's rights by the national government has too long prevented national legislation of a most beneficial kind in the educational field.

Courses for Teachers.—In every normal school in the United States there should be an elementary course of study extending at least three years above the eighth grade, and the completion of this course should be required as a minimum preparation for teaching in any school in the country. This is certainly not asking too much. Pupils who complete the eighth grade at fourteen or fifteen years, and then go to a normal school, would complete this elementary course at the age of seventeen or eighteen; and no person who has not reached this age should assume the responsibility for the care and instruction of children in any school.

The Problem of Compensation.—Were such a standard adopted as a minimum, salaries would immediately rise. (We do not often call them "salaries" but *wages*, and probably with some discrimination.) If it is said that teachers of such qualifications cannot be secured, the answer is that in a short time things would so adjust themselves that the demand would bring the supply. Salaries in the country must be higher before we can hope to secure any considerable number of teachers as well equipped and with as strong per-

sonalities as those found in the cities. It may be necessary for us to pay more than is paid in the city; for if a teacher has two offers at $65 a month, one from a city and one from the country, she will, without doubt, accept the city offer every time. True, she will have to pay more for room and board in the city; nevertheless she will prefer to be where there are the most opportunities and conveniences, with probably a better prospect for promotion. And who can blame her? It is probable that, in many instances, country districts will have to pay five or ten dollars a month more than the city if they wish to secure equally strong teachers. A country district can really afford to pay more than the city in order to get a good, strong teacher; for taxation in the country is usually lighter than it is in the city. In the city there is taxation for lighting, for paving, for sidewalks, for police protection, and for various other conveniences and necessities. The country is free from most of such levies, and it could, therefore, afford to pay a little more school tax in order to secure its share of the best teachers.

Consolidation as a Factor.—In the solution of the school problem consolidation will do much. This is being tried in almost every state of the Union and is working in the direction of progress with great satisfaction. We shall treat of this more at length in a later chapter.

Better Supervision Necessary.—Not only must we

have better teachers in the country, but we must have more and better supervision. There is no valid reason why country superintendents should be elected on a political platform. It is the custom everywhere to choose city superintendents from among the best men or women anywhere in the field, inside or outside of the state. Such should also be the practice in choosing county superintendents. Then, too, a county should be divided into districts and more assistance given the county superintendent in the supervision of schools. In other words, supervision should be persistent, consistent, and systematic; visits should be more frequent. In the city a superintendent or principal has all his schools and teachers either in one building or in several buildings at no great distance apart. In the latter case he can go from one to another in a few minutes, staying at each as long as he thinks necessary. Little time is lost in travel. The opposite condition is one of the difficulties of rural supervision, and it must be overcome in some satisfactory way.

A Model Rural School.—It would be a good plan for the state to establish in each county one model rural school. Such schools might be maintained wholly or in part by the state, and they would become models for all the neighboring districts. Children are always imitative, and people are only children of a larger growth. Most people learn to do things better by imitation; and so these model state schools would serve as patterns to be studied and copied by others.

The Teacher Should Lead.—The school should be the mainspring of educational and social life in the community; hence, only such teachers should be employed as are real originators of activity in rural schools and in rural life. The teacher should be a "live wire" and should be "doing things" all the time. He should be the leader of his community and his people.

A Good Boarding Place.—A serious difficulty connected with teaching in the country is that of securing a good boarding place and temporary home. This may not be a troublesome problem in the older and well-established communities, but in the newer states and sparsely settled sections the condition is almost forbidding. Half the enjoyment of life consists in having a comfortable home and a good room to oneself. This is absolutely necessary in order to do one's work well, especially the work of the teacher. Some of the experiences which teachers have been obliged to go through are almost incredible. Almost every teacher of a country school could give vivid and pathetic illustrations and examples of the discomforts, the annoyances, and the trials to which a boarder in a strange family is subjected. The question of a boarding place should be in the mind and plan of every school board when they employ a teacher for their district. It is they who should solve this problem for the teacher by having a good available home provided in advance.

CHAPTER VI

CONSOLIDATION OF RURAL SCHOOLS

MUCH has been said and written in regard to what is generally known as the "consolidation of schools." Men and women interested in the cause of popular education have come to feel that the rural schools throughout the country are making little or no progress, and public attention has therefore been turned to consolidation as one of the possible means of improvement.

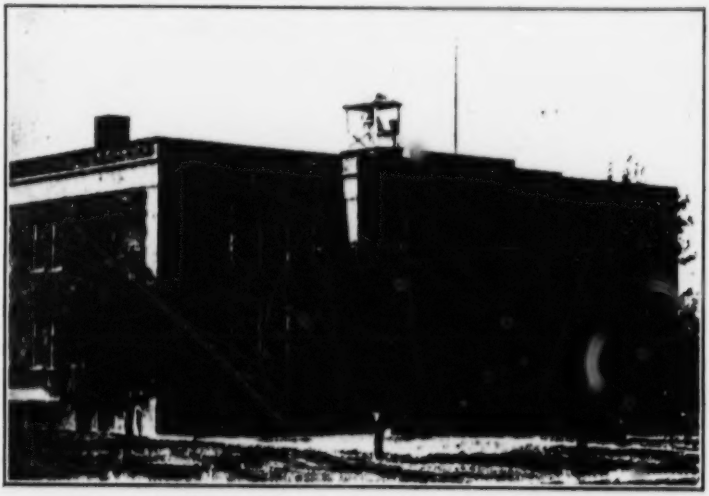
The Process.—As the name implies, the process is simply the bringing together and the fusing of two or more schools into one. If two or more communities, each having a small school of a few children, conclude that their schools are becoming ineffective and that it would be advantageous to unite, each may sell its own schoolhouse, and a new one may be built large enough for all and more centrally located with regard to the whole territory. They thus "consolidate" the schools of the several districts and establish a single large one. In many portions of the country the rural schools have, from various causes, grown smaller and smaller, until they have ceased to be places of interest, of activity, and of life. Now, a school, if it means anything, means a

place where minds are stimulated and awakened as well as where knowledge is communicated. There can be but little stimulation in a school of only a few children. The pupils feel it and so does the teacher. Life, activity, mental aspiration are always found where large numbers of persons congregate. For these reasons the idea of consolidating the small schools into important centers, or units, is forcing itself upon the people of the country. Where the schools are small and the roads are good, everything favors the bringing of the children to a larger and more stimulating social and educational center.

When Not Necessary.—It might happen, as it frequently does, that a school is already sufficiently large, active, and enthusiastic to make it inadvisable to give up its identity and become merged in the larger consolidated school. If there are twenty or thirty children and an efficient teacher we have the essential factors of a good school. Furthermore, it is rather difficult to transport, for several miles, a larger number than this.

The District System.—There are two different kinds of country school organization. In some states, what is known as the district system is the prevailing one. This means that a school district, more or less irregular in shape and containing probably six to ten square miles, is organized into a corporation for school purposes. The schoolhouse is situated somewhere near the center of this district and is usually a small, boxlike affair, often

A frame building and adequate conveyances



A substantial and well-planned building

TWO TYPES OF CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

were abdicating government and responsibility. They hesitate to merge themselves in a larger organization, and hence they advance many objections to the consolidation of their schools. All this is but natural. The several communities have been living apart educationally and have been in a measure strangers. They have never had any occasion to meet in conference, to exchange thought, and to do business together; hence they fear and hesitate to take a leap in the dark, as they conceive it, and to embark upon a course which they think they may afterwards regret. Consolidation frequently fails because of false apprehensions due to a lack of social organization.

Easier in Township System.—It is quite otherwise where the township system exists. Here there are no separate corporations or organizations controlling the various schools. The school board administers the affairs of all the schools in the township. Hence there is no sentiment in regard to the separate and distinct individuality of each school and its patronage. There are no sub-districts or distinctly organized communities; a whole township or two townships constitute one large district and the schools are located at the most convenient points to serve the children of the whole township. The people in such districts have been accustomed to act together educationally as well as politically, and to exchange thought on all such situations. Hence consolidation, or the union of the several schools, is a comparatively easy matter.

Consolidation a Special Problem for Each District.—It will, of course, be seen at once that, in a school township where there are several small and somewhat lifeless schools with only a few children in each, it would be desirable for several reasons to bring together all the children into one large and animated center. This process is a specific local problem. Whether or not such consolidation is advisable depends upon many conditions, among which are, (1) the size of the former schools, (2) the unanimity of sentiment in the community, (3) the location of roads and of residences, (4) the distance the pupils are to be transported, and other local and special considerations. The people of each district should get together and discuss these problems from various points of view and decide for themselves whether or not they shall adopt the plan and also the extent to which it shall be carried. Much will depend upon the size of the schools and everything upon the unanimity of sentiment in the community. If there is a large minority against consolidation the wisdom of forcing it by a small majority is to be questioned. It would be better to let the idea "work" a while longer.

Disagreements on Transportation.—The problem of transporting pupils is always a puzzling one. Many details are involved in its solution and it is upon details that communities usually disagree. Most enterprises are wrecked by disagreements over small matters. Even among friends it is the small details in manner-

isms or conduct that become with time so irritating that friendship is often strained. Details are usually small, but their obtrusive, perpetual presence is likely to disturb one's nerves. This is true in deliberative bodies of all kinds. Important measures are often delayed or killed because their advocates and opponents cannot "give and take" upon small points. Almost every great measure passing successfully through legislative bodies and, in fact, the settlement of many social problems embody a compromise on details. Many good people forget that, while there should be unanimity in essentials, there should be liberty in non-essentials, and charity in all things. Many people lack the power of perspective in the discussion and solution of problems; for them all facts are of the same magnitude. Large things which they do not wish are minimized and small things are magnified. A copper cent may be held so near the eye that it will obscure the sun. Probably there has been no difficulty greater in the process of consolidation than the problems involved in the details concerning the transportation of pupils.

Each Community Must Decide for Itself.—The particular mode of transportation must be determined by the conditions existing in each community. In some places the consolidated school district provides one or more busses, or, as they are sometimes called, "vans"; and these go to the homes of the children each morning in time to arrive at the schoolhouse before nine o'clock.

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Of course, in this case the pupils living farthest from the school must rise and be ready earliest; they are on the road for the greatest length of time. But this is one of the minor discomforts which must be borne by those families and their children. All cannot live near the school. Sometimes a different plan of transportation is found to give better satisfaction. The parents may prefer to bring their own children to school or to make definite arrangements with nearby neighbors who bring theirs. There is no one way which is the only way, and, in fact, several methods may be used in the same district.

The Distance to Be Transported.—If pupils must be transported over five or six miles, consolidation becomes a doubtful experiment. Of course, the vehicles used should be comfortable and every care should be taken of the children; but six miles over country roads and in all kinds of weather means, probably, an hour and a quarter on the road both morning and evening. It could, of course, be said in reply that six miles in a comfortable wagon and an hour and a quarter on the road are not nearly so bad as a mile and a quarter on foot at certain seasons of the year.

Responsible Driver.—Another point upon which all parents should insist is that the transportation of their children should be performed by reliable and responsible drivers. This is important and most necessary. Under such conditions there would be no danger

of children being drenched with rain in summer and exposed to cold in winter, for the vehicles would be so constructed as to offer protection against both. There would also be no danger of the large boys bullying and browbeating the smaller children on the way, as is often done when they walk to school over long and lonely roads; for all would be under the care of a trustworthy driver until they were landed at the door of the schoolhouse or the home.

Cost of Consolidation.—The cost of consolidation is always an important consideration. Under the district system one district may be wealthy and another poor, the former having scarcely any taxation and the latter a high rate of taxation. It is usual that, in such cases, the districts having a small rate of taxation are unwilling to consolidate with others. This is one of the difficulties. Consolidation will bring about uniformity of taxation in the whole territory affected. This is an advantage in itself. If the old schoolhouses are in good condition there will be somewhat of a loss in selling them and in building a large new central building. This is another situation which always complicates the problem. If the old buildings are worthless and if they must be replaced in any event by new buildings, then the time is opportune for considering consolidation.

Even after the reorganization is effected, and the new central building located, the cost of education, all things considered, is not increased. It is undoubt-

edly true that a larger amount of money may be needed to maintain the consolidated school than to maintain all the various small schools which have previously existed. But other factors must be taken into account. The total amount of dollars and cents in the one situation as compared with the total amount in the other does not tell the whole story. For it has been found that, everywhere in the country, there is a larger and better attendance of pupils in the consolidated school, that more pupils go to school, that they attend more regularly, and that the school terms are longer. Therefore the proper test of expense is the cost of a day's schooling for each pupil, or the cost "per pupil per day." Measured by this standard education in the consolidated school is no more expensive than in the unconsolidated schools; indeed it is usually less expensive. It is a good thing for society to give a day's education to one child; then education pays as it goes, and the more days' education it can offer, the better.

More Life in the Consolidated School.—No one can deny that in this larger school there can be more life and activity of all kinds, and a much finer school spirit than was possible in the smaller schools. Education means stimulation and where a great many children are brought together and properly organized and graded there is a more stimulating atmosphere and environment.

Some Grading Desirable.—In these consolidated

schools a reasonable amount of grading can be secured. It may be true that in some of the large cities an extreme degree of grading defeats education and the true aim of organization, but certainly in consolidated rural schools no such degree of refinement need be reached or feared. Grading can remain here in the golden mean and will be beneficial to pupils and teachers alike. The pupils thus graded will have more time for recitation and instruction, and teachers will have more time to do efficient work. In the one-room rural school one teacher usually has eight grades and often more, and sometimes she is required to conduct thirty or forty different recitations in a day. Under such conditions the lack of time prevents the attainment of good results.

Better Teachers.—It is also true that, where a school is larger and attains to more of a system, better teachers are sought and secured by the authorities. As we have already said, the cities are able to bid higher for the best trained teachers, so the country districts suffer in the economic competition. But the consolidated school being organized, equipped, and graded, and representing, as it does, a large community or district, the tendency will be to secure as good teachers as possible. This is helped along by the comparison and competition of teachers working side by side within the walls of the same building. In such schools, too, there is usually a principal, and he exercises the function of selection and rejection in the choice of

teachers. All this conduces to the securing of good teachers in the consolidated center.

Better Buildings and Inspection.—Similar improvements are attained in the building as a whole, in the individual rooms, and in the interior equipment. Such buildings are usually planned by competent architects and are more adequate in all their appointments. All things are subject to inspection, both by the community and the authorities. It is natural that such inspection and criticism will be satisfied only with the best; and so the surroundings of pupils become much more favorable to their mental, moral, and physical well-being than was possible in the isolated one-room school building.

Longer Terms.—The same discussion, agitation, inspection, and supervision will inevitably lead to longer terms of school. Whereas the one-room schools usually average six and a half months of school per year, the consolidated schools average over eight months. This is in itself a most important gain.

Regularity, Punctuality, and Attendance.—The larger spirit and life of the consolidated school induce greater punctuality and regularity of attendance. When pupils are transported to school they are always on time, and when they are members of a class where there is considerable competition they attend school with great regularity. There are many grown-up pupils in the district who would not go to the small schools, but who will go to a larger school where they

find their equals; and so the school attendance is greatly increased. We have, then, the advantages of greater punctuality, greater regularity, and more pupils in attendance.

The school spirit is abroad in the consolidated school district; people are thinking and talking school. It becomes the customary and fashionable thing to send children to school.

Better Supervision.—There is also much better supervision in the consolidated school; for, in addition to the supervision given by the county superintendent or his assistants, there is also the supervision of the principal, or head teacher. This is in itself no small factor in the making of a good school. Good supervision always makes strongly for efficiency.

The School as a Social Center.—Other effects than those above mentioned will necessarily follow. The consolidated school can and should become a social center. There should be an assembly room for lectures, debates, literary and musical entertainments, and meetings of all kinds. The lecture hall should be provided with a stage, and good moving-picture exhibitions might be given occasionally. There, also, the citizens may gather to hear public questions discussed. It could thus become a civic and social center as well as an educational center. All problems affecting the welfare of the community might be presented here; the people could assemble to listen to the discussion of political and other social and public questions, which

are the subjects of thought and of conversation in the neighborhood. This is real social and educational life.

Better Roads.—Not only does consolidation tend to all the above results but it does many other things incidentally. It leads to the making of better roads; for where a community has to travel frequently it will provide good roads. This is one of the crying needs of the day throughout the country.

Consolidation Coming Everywhere.—Consolidation is now under way in almost every state of the Union and wherever tried it has almost invariably succeeded. In but very few places have rural communities abandoned the educational, social, and civic center, and gone back to their former state of isolation and deadly routine.

The Married Teacher and Permanence.—In order to make the consolidated school a success, the policy will have to be adopted in America of building, at or near the school, a residence for the teacher, and of selecting as teacher a married man, who will make his home there among the people whose children he is to teach. Such a teacher should be a real community leader in every way, and his tenure of service should be permanent. Grave and specific reasons only should effect his removal. With single men and women it is impossible to secure the permanence of tenure that is desirable and necessary to the educational and social welfare of a school and a community. This has been demonstrated over and over again, and foreign

countries are far ahead of us in this respect. Such a real leader and teacher will, it is true, command a high salary; but a good home, permanence of position, a small tract of land for garden and field purposes, and the coming policy everywhere of an "insurance and retirement fund" would offer great inducements to strong men to take up their abode and cast their lot in such educational and community centers.

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CHAPTER VII

THE TEACHER

The Greatest Factor.—Now, although we may have a beautiful school campus, an adequate and artistic building, a library, laboratories and workshops with all necessary physical or material appointments complete, we may yet have a poor school; these things, however desirable, will not teach alone. The teacher is the mainspring, the soul of the school; the "plant," as it may be called, is only the body. A great person is one with a great soul, not necessarily with a great body. Hence it is that a great teacher with poor buildings and inferior equipments is incomparably better than great buildings and equipments without a competent teacher.

What Education Is.—Education is essentially and largely the stimulation and transformation of one mind or personality by another. It is the impression of one great mind or soul upon another, giving it a manner of spirit, a bent, an attitude, as well as a thirst for knowledge. This is too often lost sight of in the complexity of things. Many people are inclined to think that educational equipment and machinery alone will educate. There is nothing further from the truth.

Mark Hopkins would be a great teacher without equipment; buildings, grounds, apparatus, and laboratories will not really educate without a great personality behind the desk. There is probably nothing more inspiring, more suggesting, more stimulating, or more transforming than intimate contact with great minds. Thought like water seeks its level, and for children to come into living and loving communication with a great teacher is a real uplift and an education in itself.

As a saw will not saw without some extraneous power to give it motion, neither will the gun do execution without the man behind it. The locomotive is not greater than the man at the throttle, and the ship without the man at the helm flounders aimlessly upon the sea. Just so, a great personality must be behind the teacher's desk or there cannot be in any sense a real school.

What the Real Teacher Is.—The true teacher is an inspirer; that is, he breathes into his pupils his spirit, his love of learning, his method of study, his ideals. He is a real leader in every way. Children—and we are all children to a certain extent—are great imitators, and so the pupils tend to become like the teacher.

The true teacher stimulates to activity by example. Where you find such a teacher, things are constantly "doing"; people are thinking and talking school all the time; education is in the atmosphere. The real teacher is, to use a popular phrase, a "live wire." Something new is undertaken every day. He is a man of initiative

and push, and withal he is a man of sincerity and tact. While he is retrospective and circumspective he is also prospective—he is a man of the far-look-ahead type.

A Hypnotist.—The teache is in the true sense a suggester of good things. He is an educational hypnotist. The longer I continue to teach the more am I impressed with the fact that suggestion is the great art of the teacher. Hence the true teacher is the leader and not the driver.

Untying Knots.—A man once said that the best lesson he ever learned in school was the lesson of "untying knots." He meant, of course, that every problem that was thrown to the school by the teacher was "tackled" in the right spirit by the pupils. They investigated it and analyzed it; they peered into it and through it to find all the strands of relationship existing in it. It would be easier, of course, for the teacher under these circumstances merely to cut the knot and have it all done with, but this would be poor teaching. This would be *telling*, not teaching. This would lead to passivity and not to activity on the part of the pupils. And it may be said here that constant and too much *telling* is probably the greatest and most widespread mistake in teaching. Teachers are constantly cutting the knots for children who should be left to untie them for themselves. To untie a knot is to see through and through a subject, to see all around it, to see the various relations of its parts and, consequently, to understand it. This is solving a problem;

it is *dissolving* it; that is, the problem becomes a part of the pupil's own mind, and, having made it a part of himself, he understands it and never forgets it.

This is the difference between not being able to remember and not being able to forget. In the former case the so-called knowledge is not a part of oneself; it is not vital. The roots do not penetrate beneath the surface of our minds; they are, as it were, merely stuck on; the mental sap does not circulate. In the latter case the knowledge is real; it is alive and growing; there is a vital connection between it and ourselves. It would be as difficult to tear it from us as it would to have our hearts torn out and still live.

Too Much Kindness.—An illustration of the same point appears in the following incident. A boy who owned a pet squirrel thought it a kindness to the squirrel to crack all the nuts for it. The consequence was that the squirrel's incisors, above and below, grew so long that they overlapped and the animal could not eat anything. Too many teachers are so kind to their pupils that they crack all the educational nuts for them, with the consequence that the children become passive and die mentally for want of activity. The true teacher will allow his pupils to wrestle with their problems without interruption until they arrive at a conclusion. If some pupil "goes into the ditch" and flounders he should usually be allowed to get out by his own efforts as best he can. Here is the place where the teacher "should be cruel only to be kind."

The Button Illustration.—Another illustration may help to bring to us one of the characteristics of the really good teacher. When children, we have all, no doubt, amused ourselves by putting a string through two holes of a button and, after twirling it around between our thumbs, drawing it steadily in measured fashion so as to make the button spin and hum. If the string is drawn properly this will be successful; otherwise it will become a perfect snarl. This common experience has often seemed to me to typify two different kinds of school. In one, where there is a great teacher "drawing" the school properly, you will hear, incidentally, the hum of industry, for all are active. A school which may be thus characterized is always better than the one characterized by silence and inaction. A little noise—in fact a considerable noise—is not inconsistent with a good school, and it frequently happens that what we call "the silence of death" is due to fear, which is always paralyzing.

The Chariot Race.—Still another illustration may help to make clear what is meant by a good school and a good teacher. Lew Wallace, in his account of the chariot race, makes Ben Hur and his rival approach the goal with their horses neck and neck. He says that Ben Hur, in getting the best out of his steeds, *sent his will out along the reins.* A really spirited horse responds to the throb of his driver's hand upon the rein. A good driver gets the best out of his horse; he and his horse are in accord and the horse takes as

much pride in the performance as the driver does. This is analogously true of a good school.

The schoolroom is not a complete democracy—in fact, it is not a democracy at all in the lower grades; it is or should be a benevolent autocracy. The teacher within the schoolroom is the law-making body, the interpreter of the laws, and the executor of the laws. The good teacher does all this justly and kindly, and so elicits the admiration, the respect, and the active support of the governed. He sends his will out along the reins. Some schools—those with great teachers in charge—are in this condition; they are coming in under full speed toward the goal, guided by a master whose will stimulates the pupils to the greatest voluntary activity. Other schools, we are sorry to say, illustrate the conditions where the reins are over the dashboard and the school is running away, pell-mell!

Physically Sound.—What are some of the characteristic attributes or traits which a masterful and inspiring teacher should possess? In the first place he should be physically sound. It may seem like a lack of charity to say, and yet it is true, that any serious physical defect should militate against, if not bar, one from the schoolroom. Any serious blemish or noticeable defect becomes to pupils an ever-present suggestive picture, and to some extent must work against, rather than for, education. Other things being equal, those who are personally attractive and have the most agreeable manners should be chosen. Since children are

extremely plastic and impressionable, and so susceptible to the influence of ideas and ideals, beauty and perfection should, whenever possible, be the attributes of the person who is to guide and fashion them.

Character.—A teacher should be morally sound; he should "ring true." One can give only what one has. A liar cannot teach veracity; a dishonest person can not teach honesty; the impure cannot teach purity. One may deceive for a time, but in the long run the echo of what we are, and hence what we can give, will be returned. It is often thought that children are better judges of moral defects and of shams than are grown people; but, while this is not true, it is nevertheless a fact that many children, in a short time, divine or sense the true moral nature of the teacher. Children appreciate justice and will endure and even welcome severity if they know that justice is coupled with it. They are not averse to being governed with a firm hand. If pupils are allowed to do just as they please they may go home at the close of the first day, saying that they had a "lovely time" and liked their teacher, but in a very few days they will tire of it and begin to complain.

Well Educated.—We need not, of course, contend at any length that a teacher should be well educated, in the academic sense of the word. In order to teach well, one must understand his subject thoroughly. It is quite generally held that a teacher should be at least four years in advance, academically, of the pupils

whom he is to teach. Whether this is true or not in particular cases, the fact remains that the teacher should be full of his subject, should be at home in it, and should be able to illustrate it in its various phases; he should be free to stand before his class without textbook in hand and to give instruction from a full and accurate mind. There is probably nothing that so destroys the confidence of pupils as the lamentable spectacle of seeing the teacher compelled at every turn to refer to the book for verification of the answers given. It is a sign of pitiable weakness. If a distinction is to be made between knowledge and wisdom a true teacher should be possessed of the latter to a considerable extent. He should also have prudence, or practical wisdom. Wisdom and prudence imply that fine perspective which gives a person balance and tact in all situations. It should be noted that there is a policy, or diplomacy, in a good sense, which does not in any way conflict with principle; and the true teacher should have the knowledge, the wisdom, and the tact to do and to say the right thing at the right time and to leave unsaid and undone many, many things.

Professional Preparation.—In addition to a thorough knowledge of subject matter every teacher should have had some professional preparation for his work. Teaching, like government, is one of the most complicated of arts, and to engage in it without any previous study of its problems, its principles, and its methods seems like foolhardiness. There are scores, if not

hundreds, of topics and problems which should be thought out and talked over before the teacher engages in actual work in the schoolroom. When the solutions of these problems have become a part of his own mind, they will come to his rescue as occasion demands; and, although much must be learned by experience, a sound knowledge of the fundamental principles of education and teaching will always throw much light upon practical procedure. It is true that theory without practice is often visionary, but it is equally true that practice without any previous knowledge, or theory, is very often blind.

Experience.—In addition to the foregoing qualifications the teacher, in order to be really masterful, must have had some—indeed considerable—actual experience. It is this that gives confidence and firmness to all our procedure. The young lawyer when he appears at the bar, to plead his first case, finds his knees knocking together; but after a few months or years of practice he acquires ease, confidence, and mastery in his work. The same is true of the physician and the teacher. Some successful experience always counts for much. School boards, however, often over-estimate *mere* experience. Poor experience may be worse than none; and some good superintendents are willing, and often prefer, to select promising candidates without experience, and then train or build them up into the kind of teachers they wish them to become.

Choosing a Teacher.—If I were a member of a school

board in a country district where there is either a good one-room school or a consolidated school, I should go about securing a good teacher somewhat as follows: I should keep, so to speak, my "weather eye" open for a teacher who had become known to some extent in all the surrounding country; one who had made a name and a reputation for himself. I should inquire, in regard to this teacher, of the county superintendent and of his supervising officers. I should make this my business; and then, if I should become convinced that such a person was the one needed in our school, and if I had the authority to act, I should employ such a person regardless of wages or salary. If after a term or two this teacher should make a satisfactory record, I would then promote him, unsolicited, and endeavor to keep him as long as he would stay.

A "Scoop."—Sometimes there is considerable rivalry among the newspapers of a city. The editors or local reporters watch for what they call a "scoop." This is a piece of news that will be very much sought by the public and which remains unknown to the people or, in fact, to the other papers until it appears in the one that has discovered it. This is analogous to what I should try to do in securing a teacher: I should try to get a veritable educational "scoop" on all the other districts of the surrounding country. The only way to secure such persons is for some individual or for the school board to make this a specific business. In the

country districts this might be done by one of the leading directors; in a consolidated school, by the principal or superintendent. If it is true that "as the teacher so is the school," it is likewise true that as is the principal or superintendent so are the teachers.

What Makes the Difference.—It will be found that a small difference in salary will frequently make all the difference between a worthless and an excellent teacher. It is often the ten or fifteen dollars a month additional which secures the prize teacher; and so I should make the difference in salary a secondary consideration; for, after all, the difference amounts to very little in the taxation on the whole community.

A Question of Teachers.—The question of teachers is the real problem in education, from the primary school to the great universities. It is the poor teaching of poor teachers everywhere that sets at naught the processes of education; and when the American people, and especially the rural people, realize that this is the heart and center of their problem, and when they realize also that the difference, financially, between a poor teacher and a good one is so small, they will rise to the occasion and proceed to a correct solution of their problem.

CHAPTER VIII

THE THREE INSEPARABLES

In the preceding chapter we discussed the type of person that should be in evidence everywhere in the teaching profession. Such a type is absolutely necessary to the attainment of genuine success. In rural schools this type is by no means too common, and in the whole field of elementary and higher education it is much more rare than it should be. Because of the frequent appearance of the opposite type in colleges and in other schools, the teacher and the professor have been often caricatured to their discredit. There is usually some truth underlying a caricature; a cartoon would lack point if it did not possess a substratum of fact.

The "Mode."—Now, there is often in the public mind this poorer type of teacher; and when an idea or an ideal, however low, becomes once established, it is changed only with difficulty. The commonplace individual, the mediocre type of man or of woman, is by many regarded as a fairly typical representative of what the teacher usually is; or, as the statistician would express it, he is the "mode" rather than the average. The "mode" in any class of objects or of individuals

is the one that occurs oftenest, the one most frequently met with. And so this inactive, nondescript sort of person is often thought of as the typical teacher. He has no very high standing either financially or socially, and so has no great influence on the individuals around him or on the community in general. This conception has become so well established in the public mind, and is so frequently met with, that all teachers are regarded as being of the same type. The better teachers, the strong personalities, are brought into this same class and must suffer the consequences.

The "Mode" in Labor.—This same process of classifying individuals may be seen in other spheres also. In some sections of the country it is the method of estimating the worth of laboring men; all in the same class are considered equal; all of a class are reduced to the same level and paid the same wages. One man can do and often does the work of two or three men, and does it better; yet he must labor for the same common wage.

The "Mode" in Educational Institutions.—The same is to a great extent true of the popular estimate of educational institutions. In the public mind an institution is merely an "institution." One is thought of as doing practically the same work as another; so when institutions come before legislatures for financial recognition in the way of appropriations, one institution is considered as deserving as another. The great public is not keen in its discriminations, whether

it be a case of educational institutions, of laboring men, or of teachers.

No "Profession."—The fact is that, in the lower ranks of the teachers' calling, there is really no *profession*. The personality of many who engage in the work is too ordinary to professionalize any calling.

Weak Personalities.—This condition of affairs has grown partly out of the fact that we have not, in the different states and in the country at large, a sufficiently high standard. The examinations are not sufficiently extensive and intensive to separate the sheep from the goats. The unqualified thus rush in and drive out the qualified, for the efficient cannot compete with the inefficient. The calling is in no sense a "closed" profession, and consequently in the lower ranks it is scarcely a profession at all.

Low Standard.—There is also established in the public mind a certain standard, or test, for common school teaching. This standard has been current so long that it has become quite stable, and it seems almost impossible to change it. As in the case of some individuals when they become possessed of an idea, it is almost impossible to dispossess the social mind of this low standard.

The Norm of Wages Too Low.—In regard to the wages of teachers it may be said that there is fixed in the social mind also, a certain *norm*. As in the case of personality and of standard qualifications, a certain amount of wages has long been regarded as representing

the sum which a teacher ought to receive. For rural schools this is probably about fifty dollars a month; in fact, in most states the average wage paid to rural school teachers is below that amount. But let us say that fifty dollars is the amount that has become established in the popular mind as a reasonable salary. Here, as in the other cases, it is very difficult to change ideas established by long custom. For many years people have been accustomed to think of teachers receiving certain salaries, and they refuse to consider any higher sums as appropriate. This, of course, is an egregious blunder. The rural schools can never be lifted above their present plane of efficiency until these three conceptions, (1) that of personality, (2) that of standard, and, (3) that of wages, are revised in the public mind. There will have to be a great revolution in the thought of the people in regard to these inseparable things.

The Inseparables.—The fact is that, (1) strong personalities, (2) a high standard of qualifications, (3) and a respectable salary go hand in hand. They rise and fall together; they are reactive, one upon the other. The strong personality implies the ability to meet a high standard and demands reasonable compensation. The same is true of the high standard—it selects the strong personality and this in turn cannot be secured except at a good salary. It may be maintained that if school boards really face the question in earnest, and are willing to offer good salaries,

strong personalities who are able to meet that high standard can always be secured. Professor Hugo Münsterberg says: "Our present civilization shows that in every country really decisive achievement is found only in those fields which draw the strongest minds, and that they are drawn only where the greatest premiums are tempting them." [1]

Raise the Standard First.—The best way, then, to attack the problem is, first, to raise the standard. This will eliminate inferior teachers and retain or attract those of superior qualifications. It is to be regretted that we have not, in the United States, a more uniform standard for teaching in the common schools. Each state has its own laws, its own standard. It would not, we think, be asking too much to provide that no person should teach in any grade of school, rural or elementary, in the United States, unless such person has had a course for teachers equivalent to at least three years of work in the high school or normal school, with pedagogical preparation and training. In fact, a national law making such a uniform standard among the teachers in the common schools of the country would be an advantage. But this is probably more than we can expect in the near future. As it is, there should be a conference of the educational authorities in each state to agree upon a standard for teaching, with a view to uniform state legislation.

[1] Psychology and Social Sanity, p. 82.

More Men.—One of the great needs of the calling is more men. There was a time when all teachers were men; now nearly all teachers are women. There is as much reason for one condition as for the other. Without going into an analysis of the situation or the causes which make it desirable that there should be more men in the teaching profession, it is, we think, generally granted that the conditions would be better, educationally, socially, and every other way, if the number of men and women in the work were about evenly divided.

Coöperation Needed.—Educational movements and influences have spread downward and outward from above. The great universities of the world were established before the secondary and elementary school systems came into existence. Thought settles down from leaders who are in high places. We have shown in a former chapter that the state universities, the agricultural colleges, the normal schools, and the high schools have had a wonderful development within the last generation, while the rural school has too often lagged perceptibly behind. The country districts have helped to support in every way the development of the higher schools; now an excellent opportunity presents itself for all the higher and secondary educational influences to unite in helping to advance the interests and increase the efficiency of the rural schools.

The Supply.—The question is sometimes asked whether the right kind of teachers can be secured, if

higher salaries are offered. There can be no doubt at all on this point. Where the demand exists and where there is sufficient inducement offered, the supply is always forthcoming. Men are always at hand to engage in the most menial and even the most dangerous occupations if a sufficient reward, financial or otherwise, is offered. For high wages men are induced to work in factories where mercury must be handled and where it is well known that life is shortened many years as a consequence. Men are secured to work long hours in the presence of red-hot blast furnaces and in the lowest depths of the holds of ships. Can it be possible that with a reasonable salary the strongest kind of men would not be attracted to a calling that has as many points of interest and as many attractions as teaching?

Make It Fashionable.—A great deal depends upon making any work or any calling fashionable. All that is needed is for the tide to turn in that direction. It is difficult to say how much salary will stop the outward tide and cause it to set in the other direction; but one thing is certain, we shall never completely solve the rural school problem until the tide turns.

The Retirement System.—Strong personalities will, then, help to make teaching attractive and fashionable, as well as effectual. There is a movement now becoming quite extensive which will also add to the attractiveness of the teacher's calling. A system or plan of insurance and retirement is now being in-

stalled in many states for the benefit of teachers who become incapacitated or who have taught a certain period of time. This plan gives a feeling of contentment, and also a feeling of security against the stress and needs of old age, which will do much to hold strong people in the profession. The fear of being left penniless in later life and dependent upon others or upon the state, induces, without doubt, a great many persons to leave a calling so poorly paid, in order that they may, in more generous vocations, lay something by for "a rainy day." The truth of this is borne in upon us more strongly when we remember that teaching is different from law, medicine, or other professions. In these vocations a man's service usually becomes more and more in demand as he advances in years, on account of the reputation and experience he has gained; while in teaching, when a person arrives at the middle line of life or after, school boards begin to say and to think that he is getting too old for the schoolroom, and so they seek for younger talent. The consequence is that the good and faithful public servant who has given the best years of his life to the education of the young is left stranded in old age without an occupation and without money. The insurance and retirement fund plan is a movement in the right direction and will do something to help turn the tide of strong personalities toward the teachers' calling.

City and Country Salaries—Effects.—The average

salary for rural school teachers in one state I find to be $45 a month. In that same state the average salary of teachers in the city and town schools is $55 a month. Now, under such conditions, it is very difficult to secure a good corps of teachers for the rural schools. If the ratio were reversed and the rural schools paid $55 a month, while the cities and towns paid only $45, there would be more chance of each securing teachers of equal ability. Even then, teachers would prefer to go to the city at the lower salary on account of the additional attractions and conveniences and the additional facilities and opportunities of every kind for self-improvement.

In the state referred to, the average salary of all teachers in the common schools was $51 a month. It is utterly impossible to realize a "profession" on such a financial basis as this. Forty-five or fifty dollars a month for rural teachers is altogether too low. This must be raised fifty, if not one hundred per cent, in order that a beginning may be made in the solution of the rural school problem. Where $50 a month seems to be the going wage, if school boards would offer $75 and then see to it that the persons whom they hire are efficient, an attempt at the solution of the problem in that district or neighborhood would be made. Is it possible that any good, strong, educated, and cultured person can be secured for less than $75 a month? If in such a district there were eight months of school this would mean only 8 x $25,

or $200 more than had been paid previously. For ten sections of land this would mean about $20 a section, or $5 a quarter section, in addition to what they had been paying with unsatisfactory results.

This sum often represents the difference between a poor school and a good school. With a fifty-dollar teacher, constructive work was likely lacking. There was little activity in the neighborhood; the pupils or the people had not been fully waked up. There had not been enough thinking and talking of education and of schools, enough reading, or talking about books, about education, about things of the higher life. Under the seventy-five-dollar teacher, wisely chosen, all this is changed.

The Solution Demands More.—Instead of $75, a community should pay to a wide-awake person, who takes hold of a situation in a neighborhood and keeps things moving, at least $100 a month. With nine months' school this would mean $900; and it is strange, indeed, if a person in the prime of life who has spent many years in the preparation of his work, and who has initiative and push, is not worth $100 a month for nine months in the year. To such a person the people of that neighborhood intrust their dearest and priceless possessions—their own children. If we remember that, as the twig is bent the tree is inclined, there need be no hesitation about the value of efficient teaching during the plastic period of childhood. In fact, it may easily be maintained that the salary should

be even higher than this. But, if this be so, how far are we at present from even a beginning of the solution of our rural school problem!

A Good School Board.—A good school board is one whose members are alive to their duties and wide-awake to the problems of education. They are men or women who have an intelligent grasp of the situation and who will earnestly attempt to solve the educational problems of school and of life in their community.

Board and Teacher.—If a poor teacher and a good school board are brought together the chances are that they will soon part company. A good school board will not retain a poor teacher longer than it is compelled to do so. A poor school board and a good teacher will also part company, for the good teacher will not stay; he will leave and find relief as soon as possible. Under a poor school board and a poor teacher nothing will be done; the children, instead of being educated, will be de-educated. Quarrels and dissensions will be created in the neighborhood and a miserable condition, educationally and socially, will prevail. If a good school board and a good teacher join hands, the problem is solved, or at least is in a fair way to being solved. This last condition will mean an interested school, a united neighborhood, a live, wide-awake, and happy community.

The Ideal.—It is as impossible to describe a successful solution of the problems of any particular school as it is to paint the lily, the rose, or the rainbow.

All are equally indescribable and intangible, but nevertheless the more real, potent, and inspiring on that account. Such a situation means the presence of a strong life, a strong mind, and a strong hand exemplifying ideals every day. This is education, this is growth, this is real life.

CHAPTER IX

THE RURAL SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Imitation.—There are two processes by which all progress is attained, namely, imitation and invention. Imitation is found everywhere, in all spheres of thought and of action. Children are great imitators, and adults are only children grown up. Imitation, of course, is a necessary thing. Without it no use could be made of past experience. When it conserves and propagates the good it is to be commended; but the worthless and the bad are often imitated also. As imitation is necessary for the preservation of past experience, so invention is equally essential in blazing new paths of thought and of action. It is probably true that all persons are more prone to imitation than to invention.

The Country Imitates the City.—The rural schools have always imitated the city schools, as rural life attempts to imitate city life. Many of the books used in rural schools have been written largely with city conditions in mind and by authors who have been city bred or city won. These books have about them the atmosphere and the flavor of the city. Their selections as a rule contain references and allusions

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without number to city life, and give a cityward bent; their connotation and attitude tend to direct the mind toward the city. As a consequence even school textbooks have been potent aids in the urban trend.

Textbooks.—It is not urged that the subject matter of textbooks be made altogether rural in its applications and references. The books should not be completely *ruralized;* nor should there be two sets of books, one for the country and one for the city. But there should be a more even balance between the city aspect and the rural aspect of textbooks, whether used in the country or in the city. If some of the texts now used were rewritten with the purpose of attaining that balance, they would greatly assist the curriculum in both country and city schools. There is no reason why city children should not have their minds touched by the life, the thought, and the activities of the country; and it is granted that country children should be made conscious and cognizant of the life, the thought, and the activities of the city. There is no more reason why textbooks should carry the urban message, than that they should be dominantly ruralizing.

An Interpreting Core.—The experiences of country children are of all kinds; rural life, thought, and aspirations constitute the very development of their consciousness and minds. In all their practical experiences rural life and thought form the anchorage of their later academic instruction. This early ex-

perience constitutes what the Herbartians term their "apperception mass"; and children, as well as grown-ups, can interpret new matter only in terms of the old. The experiences of the child, which constitute his world of thought, of discourse, and of action, are the only means by which he grasps and interprets new thought and experience. Consequently, the texts which rural children use should make a strong appeal to their apperception mass—to their old stock and store of knowledge. It is the textbooks that bring to the old knowledge new mental material which the teacher and the textbook together attempt to communicate to the children. Without an interpreting center—a stock and store of old knowledge which constitute the very mental life of the child—it is impossible for him to assimilate the new. The old experiences are, in fact, the mental digestive apparatus of the child. Without this center, or core, the new instead of being assimilated is, so to speak, merely stuck on. This is the case with much of the subject matter in city-made texts. It does not *grow*, but soon withers and falls away. It is, then, essential that the textbooks used in rural schools should have the rural bent and application, the rural flavor, the rural beck and welcome.

Rural Teachers from the City.—A great many teachers of country schools come from the city. A number of these are young girls having, without blame on their part, the tone and temper, the attitude, spirit, and

training which the city gives. Their minds have been *urbanized;* all their thoughts are city thoughts. The textbooks which they have used have been city textbooks; their teachers have for the most part been those in or from the city. It can scarcely be expected that such teachers can do for the rural districts all that ought to be done. Very naturally they inspire some of the children with the idea of ultimately going to the city. This suggestion and this inspiration are given unconsciously, but in the years of childhood they take deep root and sooner or later work themselves out in an additional impetus to the urban trend.

A Course for Rural Teachers.—What is needed is a course of instruction for rural teachers, in every state of the Union. In some states the agricultural colleges have inaugurated a movement to this end. In such colleges, agricultural high schools, and institutions of a similar kind in every state, a three-year course for teachers above the eighth year, specially designed to prepare them for rural school teaching, should be established. Such a school would furnish the proper atmosphere and the proper courses of instruction to suffuse the minds of these prospective teachers with appreciation and love of country life and rural school work.

All Not to Remain in the Country.—It is not contended here that all who are born and brought up in the country ought to remain there for life. Many writers and speakers preach the gospel of "the country

for country children," but this cannot be sound. Each one, as the years go by, should "find" himself and his own proper place. There are many children brought up in the country who find their place best in the heart of the great city; and there are many brought up in the cities who ultimately find themselves and their place in the country and in its work. While all this is true it may still be maintained that the proper mental food for country children is the life and the activities of the country; and if this life and these activities are made pleasant and attractive a larger percentage of country children will remain in the country for the benefit of both country and city.

Mere Textbook Teaching.—Many teachers in the country, as well as in the city, follow literally the textbooks provided for them. Textbooks, being common and general, must leave the application of the thought largely to the teacher. To follow them is probably the easiest kind of teaching, for the mind then moves along the line of least resistance. Accordingly the tendency is merely to teach textbooks, without libraries, laboratories, and other facilities for the application of the thought of the text. Application and illustration are always difficult. It frequently happens that children go through their textbooks under the guidance of their more or less mechanical teachers, without making any application of their knowledge. Their learning seems to be stored away in pigeonholes and never used again. That in one

pigeonhole does not mix with that in another. Their thoughts and their education in different fields are in no sense united. Pupils are surprised if they are asked or expected to use their knowledge in any practical manner. A man who had a tank, seven feet in diameter and eight feet high, about half full of gasoline, asked his daughter, who was completing the eighth grade, to figure out for him how many gallons it contained. She had just been over "weights and measures" and "denominate numbers" of all kinds. After much figuring she returned the answer that there were in it about seven and one half gallons, without ever suspecting the ridiculousness of the result.

A Rich Environment.—The country is so rich in material of all kinds for scientific observation, that some education should be given to the rural child in this field. Agriculture and its various activities surround the child; nature teems with life, both animal and vegetable; the country furnishes long stretches of meadow and woodland for observation and study. Yet in most places the children are blind to the beauties and wonders around them. Nature study in such an environment should be a fascinating subject, and agriculture is full of possibilities for the application of the thought in the textbooks.

Who Will Teach These Things?—But who will teach these new sciences or open the eyes of the child to the beauties around him? Not everyone can do it. It will require a master. Teaching "at" these things

in a dull, perfunctory way will do no good. It would be better to leave them untaught. We have, everywhere, too much "attempting" to teach and not enough teaching, too much seeming and not enough being, too much appearance and not enough reality.

An example will illustrate the author's meaning. Some years ago an experienced institute conductor in a western state found himself the sole instructor when the teachers of the county convened. He sought among the teachers for someone who could and would give him assistance. One man of middle age, who had taught for many years, volunteered to take the subject of arithmetic and to give four lessons of forty minutes each in it during the week. This was good news to the conductor; he congratulated himself on having found some efficient help. His assistant, however, after talking on arithmetic for ten minutes of his first period, reached the limit of his capacity, either of thought or of expression, and had to stop. He could not say another word on that subject during the week! Now if this is true of an experienced middle-aged teacher of a subject so universally taught as arithmetic, how much more true must it be of an instructor in a subject like agriculture. It should not be expected that a young girl, eighteen or twenty years of age, who has probably been brought up in the city and who has had the subject of agriculture only one period a day for a year, can give any adequate instruction in that branch. She would be the butt for

ridicule among the practical boys and girls in the country who would probably know more about such things than she. She would, therefore, lose the respect and confidence of pupils and parents, and it would really be better for her and for all concerned not to attempt the teaching of that subject at all. What is worth doing at all is worth doing well. A little instruction well given and well applied is worth any amount of "stuff" poorly done and unapplied.

The Scientific Spirit Needed.—There is great need of teachers who are thoroughly imbued with the scientific spirit. In the country especially there is need of teachers who will rouse the boys and girls to the investigation of problems from the facts at hand and all around them. This should be done inductively and in an investigative spirit. Our whole system of education seems somewhat vitiated by the deductive attitude and method of teaching—the assuming of theories handed down by the past, without investigation or verification. This is the kind of teaching which has paralyzed China for untold generations. The easiest thing to do is to accept something which somebody else has formulated and then, without further ado, to be content with it. The truly scientific mind, the investigative mind, is one that starts with facts or phenomena and, after observing a sufficient number of them, formulates a conclusion and tests it. This will result in real thinking—which is the same as "thinging." It is putting *things* into causal relation

and constructing from them, unity out of diversity. To induce this habit of thought, to inspire this spirit of investigation and observation in children is the essence of teaching. To teach is to cause others to *think*, and the man or woman who does this is a successful teacher.

A Course of Study.—There should be in every rural school a simple and suggestive course of study. This should not be as large as a textbook. The purpose of it is not to indicate at great length and in detail either the matter or the manner of teaching any specific subject. It should be merely an outline of the metes and bounds in the processes and the progress of pupils through the grades. The course of study should be a means, not an end; it should be a servant and not a master. It should not entail upon the school or upon the teacher a vast complicated machinery or an endless routine of red tape. If it does this it defeats its true aim. Here again the country schools have attempted to imitate the city schools. In all cities grading is much more systematized, and is pushed to a greater extent than it is or should be in the country. Owing to the necessities of the situation and also to the convenience of the plan in the cities, the grades, with their appropriate books, amount of work, and plan of procedure, are much more definite than is possible or desirable in the country. To grade the country schools as definitely and as systematically as is done in the city would be to do them an irreparable injury. The

country would make a great mistake to imitate the city school systems in its courses of study.

Red Tape.—It sometimes happens that county and state superintendents, in performing the duties of their office, think it necessary to impose upon the country schools a variety of tests, examinations, reports, and what-not, which accomplish but little and may result in positive injury. To pile up complications and intricacies having no practical educational value is utterly useless. It indicates the lack of a true conception of the school situation. Such haphazard methods will not teach alone any more than a saw will saw alone. Behind it all must be the simple, great teacher, and for him all these things, beyond a reasonable extent, are hindrances to progress.

Length of Term.—In very many country districts the terms are frequently only six months in the year. This should be extended to eight at least. Even in this case, it gives the rural school a shorter term than the city school, which usually has nine or ten months each year. But it is very probable that the simplicity of rural school life and rural school teaching will enable pupils to do as much in eight months as is done in the city in nine.

Individual Work.—Individual work should be the rule in many subjects. There is no need, on account of numbers, of a lock-step. In the cities, where the teacher has probably an average of 35 to 40 children, all the pupils are held together and in line. In such

cases the great danger is to those above the average. There is the danger of forming what might be called the "slow habit." The bright pupils are retarded in their work, for they are capable of much more than they do. In such cases the retardation is not on account of the inability of the pupil but on account of the system. The bright ones are held back in line with the slow. This need not be the case in rural schools. Here, in every subject which lends itself to the plan, each pupil should be allowed to go as far and as fast as he can, provided that he appreciates the thought, solves the problems, and understands the work as he goes. I once knew a large rural school in which there were enrolled about sixty pupils, taking the subjects of all the grades, from the first to the eighth and even some high school subjects. In such classes as arithmetic the pupils were, so to speak, "turned loose" and all entered upon a race for the goal. Each one did as much as he could, his attainments being subjected to the test of examination. The plan worked excellently; no one was retarded, and all were intensely busy.

"Waking Up the Mind."—The main thing in any school is not the amount of knowledge which pupils get from textbooks or from the teacher, but the extent to which the mind appropriates that knowledge and is "waked up" by it. Mr. Page in his excellent classic, *The Theory and Practice of Teaching*, has a chapter called "Waking Up the Mind" and some excellent

illustrations as to how it may be done. The main thing is not the amount of mere knowledge or information held in memory for future delivery, but the spirit and attitude of it all. The extent to which children's minds are made awake and sensitive, and the extent to which they are inspired to pursue with zest and spirit any new problem are the best criterions of success in teaching. The spirit and method of attack is all-important; quantity is secondary. If children have each other, so to speak, "by the ears," over some problem from one day to the next, it indicates that the school and the teacher are awake, that they are up and doing, and that education, which is a process of leavening, is taking place.

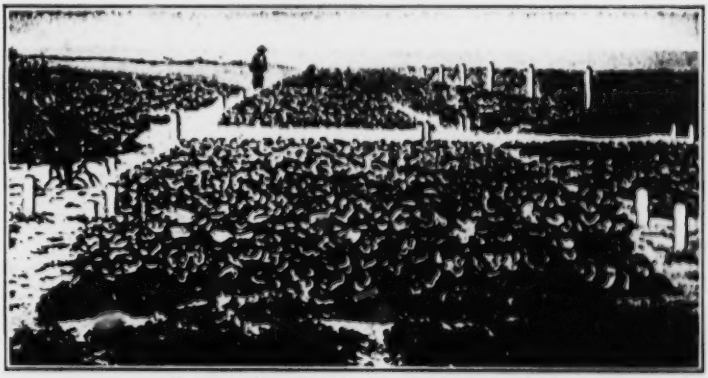
The Overflow of Instruction.—On account of the individual work which is possible in the country schools, what is sometimes called the "overflow of instruction" is an important factor in the stimulation and the education of all the children in the room. In the city school, where all are on a dead level, doing the same work, there is not much information or inspiration descending from above, for there is no class above. But in the rural school, children hear either consciously or unconsciously much that is going on around them. They hear the larger boys and girls recite and discuss many interesting things. These discussions wake up minds by sowing the seeds which afterwards come to flower and fruit in those who listen—in those who, in fact, cannot help hearing.

I remember an incident which occurred during my experience as a pupil in a country school. A certain county superintendent, who used to visit the school periodically, was in the habit, on these occasions, of reading to the school for probably half an hour. Just what he read I do not even remember, but I recall vividly his quiet manner and attitude, his beautiful and simple expression, and the whole tone and temper of the man as he gathered the thought and expressed it so beautifully and so artistically. This type of thing has great influence. It is often the intangible thing that tells and that is valuable. In every case, that which is most artistically done is probably that which leaves its impression.

Affiliation.—In some states, notably in Minnesota, an excellent plan is in vogue by which the schools surrounding a town or a city are affiliated with the city schools in such a manner as to receive the benefit of the instruction of certain special teachers from the city. These teachers—of manual training, domestic science, agriculture, etc.—are sent out from the city to these rural schools two or three times a week, and in return the country children beyond a certain grade are sent to the high school in the city. This is a process of affiliation which is stimulating and economical, and can be encouraged with good results.

The "Liking Point."—In the teaching of all subjects the important thing is that the pupil reach what may be termed the "liking point." Until a pupil has

A Christmas gathering at the new school



A school garden in the larger center

reached that point in any subject of study his work is mere drudgery—it is work which is probably disliked. The great problem for the teacher is to bring the child as soon as possible to this liking point, and then to keep him there. It is probable that every pupil can be brought to the liking point of every subject by a good teacher. Where there is difficulty in doing this, something has gone wrong somewhere, either on the part of the pupil, his former teachers, his parents, or his companions. When a pupil has reached the liking point it means that he has a keen relish, an appetite for the subject, and in this condition he will actively pursue it.

The Teacher the Chief Factor.—The foregoing observations imply again that the teacher, after all, is the great factor in the success of the school. He is the "man behind the gun"; he is the engineer at the throttle; he is the master at the helm; he is the guide, for he has been over the road; he is the organizer, the center of things; he is the mainspring; he is the soul of the school, and is greater than books or courses of study. He is the living fire at which all the children must light their torches. Again we ask, how can this kind of person be found? Without him true education, in its best sense, cannot be secured; with him the paltry consideration of salary should not enter. Without such teachers there can be no solution of the rural school problems, nor, indeed, of the rural life problems. With him and those of his class, there is great hope.

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CHAPTER X

THE SOCIAL CENTER

DURING the past few years we have heard much of what is called the "social center," or the "community center," in rural districts. This idea has grown with the spread of the consolidation of schools, and means, as the name implies, a unifying, coördinating, organizing agency of some kind in the midst of the community, to bring about a harmony and solidity of all the interests there represented. It implies of course a leader; for what is left to be done by people in general is likely to be done poorly. There is no doubt that this idea should be encouraged and promoted. People living in the country are of necessity forced to a life of isolation. Their very work and position necessitate this, and consequently it is all the more necessary that they should frequently come together in order to know each other and to act together for the benefit of all. "In union there is strength," but these people have always been under a great disadvantage in every way, because they have not organized for the purpose of united and effective coöperation.

The Teacher, the Leader.—There is no more appropriate person to bring about this organization,

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this unification, this increased solidarity, than the public school teacher of the community; but it will require the head and the hand of a real master to lead a community—to organize it, to unite it, and to keep it united. It requires a person of rare strength and tact, a person who has a clear head and a large heart, and who is "up and doing" all the time. A good second to such a person would be the minister of the neighborhood, provided he has breadth of view and a kindly and tolerant spirit. Much of the success of rural life in foreign countries, notably in Denmark, is due to the combined efforts of the schoolmaster and the minister of the community church.

Some Community Activities.—Let us suggest briefly some of the activities that are conducive to the fuller life of such a social center. It is true that these activities are more possible in the consolidated districts than in the communities where consolidation has not been effected; but many of them could be provided even in the small schools.

The Literary Society.—There should be in every school district a literary society of some kind. This of course must not be overworked, for other kinds of activities also should be organized in order to give the change which interest demands. In this literary society the interest and assistance of the adults of the neighborhood and the district, who are willing and able to coöperate, should be enlisted. There are in every community a few men and women who will

gladly assist in a work of this kind if their interest can be properly aroused. There is scarcely any better stimulus to the general interest of a neighborhood, and especially of the children in the school, than seeing and hearing some of the grown-up men and women who are their neighbors participate in such literary work.

Debates.—An important phase of the literary work of such a society should be an occasional debate. This might be participated in sometimes by adults who are not going to school, and sometimes by the bigger and more advanced pupils. Topics that are timely and of interest to the whole community should be discussed. There is probably no better way of teaching a tolerant spirit and respect for the honest opinions of others than the habit of "give and take" in debate. In such debates judges could sometimes be appointed and at other times the relative merits of the case and of the debaters might well be left to the people of the neighborhood without any formal decision having been rendered. This latter plan is the one used in practical life in regard to addresses and debates on the political platform. The discussions and differences of opinion following such debates constitute no small part of life and thought manifested later in the community.

The School Program.—A program or exhibition by the school should be given occasionally. This would differ from the work of the literary society in that it

would be confined to the pupils of the school. Such a program should be a sample of what the pupils are doing and can do. It should be a mental exhibition of the school activities. There is scarcely anything that attracts the people and the parents of the neighborhood more than the literary performances of their children, younger and older. Such performances, as in other cases, may be overdone; they may be put forward too frequently; they may also be too lengthy. But the teacher with a true perspective will see to it that all such extremes are avoided, for he realizes that there are other activities which must be developed and presented in order to secure a change of interest. These school programs occupy the mind and thought of the community for some time. The performance of the different parts and the efforts of the various children—both their successes and their failures—become the subjects of thought and of talk in the neighborhood. It acts like a kind of ferment in the social mind; it keeps the school and the community talking and thinking of school and of education.

Spelling Schools.—For a change, even an old-fashioned spelling school is not to be scorned. Years ago this was quite the custom. An entire school would, on a challenge, go as a sleigh-ride party to the challenging school. There the spelling contest would take place. One of the teachers, either the host or the guest, would pronounce the words, and the visiting school would return, either victorious or

vanquished. A performance of this kind enlists the attention and the interest of people and schools in the necessity of good spelling; it affords a delightful social recreation, stirs up thought and wakes up mind in both communities, by an interesting and courteous contest. Such results are not to be undervalued.

Lectures.—If the school is a consolidated one, or even a large district school, a good lecture course may be given to advantage. Here, again, care must be taken that the lectures, even if few, shall be choice. Nothing will kill a course of lectures sooner than to have the people deceived a few times by poor ones. It would be better to have three good lectures during the year than six that would be disappointing. These lecture courses may be secured in almost every state through the Extension Department of the various state institutions. Recently the states of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and North Dakota have entered into an arrangement whereby they will furnish any rural or urban community of these states with good lecturers at a very small consideration. Excellent lectures can be secured in this way on a great variety of subjects, including those most interesting to rural communities and most helpful in all phases of farm life. These might be secured in the winter season when there is ample time and leisure for all to attend.

Dramatic Performances.—In the social centers where the conveniences admit, simple dramatic performances might be worked up or secured from the out-

side. It is a fact that life in some country communities is not sufficiently cheered through the agency of the imagination. The tendency is for farmers and farmers' families to live a rather humdrum existence involving a good deal of toil. On the secluded farms during the long winter months, there is not much social intercourse. It has been asserted that the isolation and solitariness in sparsely settled districts are causes of the high percentage of insanity in rural and frontier communities. It is good for the mental and physical health of both old and young to be lifted, once in a while, out of the world of reality into that of the imagination. All children and young people like to play, to act, to make believe. This is a part of their life, and it is conducive to their mental and social welfare to express themselves in simple plays or to see life in its various phases presented dramatically by others.

A Musical Program.—If the teacher is a leader he will either be able, himself, to arrange a musical entertainment, or he will secure some one who can and will do so. All, it is contended, can learn to sing if they begin early enough; and there is probably no better mode of self-expression and no better way of waking up people emotionally and socially than to engage them in singing. The importance of singing, to secure good and right emotional attitudes toward life and mankind, is indicated in the saying, "Let me make the songs of a nation and I care not who makes

her laws." The importance of singing is recognized to a much greater extent in foreign countries, notably in Germany, than in America. In Germany all sing; in America, it is to be regretted, but few sing. There should be a real renaissance in music throughout the country. As an aid in the teaching of music and of song, that marvelous invention, the "talking machine," should be made use of. It would be an excellent thing if a phonograph could be put in every school. Children would become acquainted with the best music; they would grow to like it, as the weeks, months, and years roll on. This machine is a wonderful help in developing an appreciation of good music.

Slides and Moving Pictures.—In the consolidated schools, where there is a suitable hall, a moving-picture entertainment of the right kind is to be commended. The screens and the lantern enable us, in our imaginations, to live in all countries and climes. The eye is the royal road to the mind, and most people are eye-minded; and the moving picture is a wonderful agency to convey to the mind, through the eye, accurate pictures of the world around us, natural and social. The community center—the school center—should avail itself of all such inventions.

Supervised Dancing.—Even the supervised dance, where the sentiment of the community will allow, is not to be condemned. It is much better to have young people attend dances that are supervised than to attend public dances that are not supervised;

and young people, as a rule, will attend one or the other. The practical question or condition is one of supervision or no supervision, for the dance is here. The dance properly supervised, and conducted in a courteous, formal way, beginning and closing at the right time, can probably be turned to good and made an occasion for social and individual culture. The niceties and amenities of life can there be inculcated. There is no good reason why the dance activities should be turned over to the devil. There was a time and there were places where violin playing was turned over to him and banished from the churches. Dancing is too old, too general, too instinctive, and too important, not to be recognized as a means to social culture. Here again the sane teacher can be an efficient supervisor. He can take care that the young people do not become entirely dance-minded.

Sports and Games.—The various sports should not be forgotten. Skating, curling, and hockey, basket ball, and volley ball, are all fine winter sports; in summer, teams should be organized in baseball, tennis, and all the proper athletic sports and games. Play should be supervised to a certain extent; over-supervision will kill it. Sometimes plays that are not supervised at all degenerate and become worse than none. All of these physical activities and sports should be found and fostered in the rural center. They are healthful, both physically and mentally, and should be participated in by both girls and boys.

It is probably true that our schools and our education have stood, to too great an extent, for mere intellectual acquisition and training. In Sparta of old, education was probably nine tenths physical and one tenth mental. In these modern days education seems to be about ninety-nine parts mental. A sound body is the foundation of a sound mind, and time is not lost in devoting much attention to the play and games of children and young people. There is no danger in the schools of our day of going to an extreme in the direction of physical education; the danger is in not going far enough. I am not sure that it would not be better if the children in every school were kept in the open air half the time learning and participating in various games and sports, instead of, as now, poring over books and memorizing a lot of stuff that will never function on land or sea.

School Exhibits.—In the social centers a school exhibit could be occasionally given with great profit. If domestic science is taught, an occasion should be made to invite the people of the neighborhood to sample the products, for the test of the pudding is in the eating. This would make a delightful social occasion for the men and women of the community to meet each other, and the after-effects in the way of favorable comment and thought would be good. If manual training is an activity of the school, as it ought to be, a good exhibit of the product of this

department could be given. If agriculture is taught and there is a school garden, as there should be, an exhibit once a year would produce most desirable effects in the community along agricultural lines.

A Public Forum.—Aside from provisions for school activities in this social center there should be a hall where public questions can be discussed. All political parties should be given equal opportunities to present their claims before the people of the community. This would tend toward instruction, enlightenment, and toleration. The interesting questions of the day, in political and social life, should be discussed by exponents chosen by the social center committee. In America we have learned the lesson of listening quietly to speakers in a public meeting, whether we agree with them or not. In some countries, when a man rises to expound his political theories, he is hissed down or driven from the stage by force. This is not the American way. In America each man has his hour, and all listen attentively and respectfully to him. The next evening his opponent may have his hour, his inning, and the audience is as respectful to him. This is as it should be; this is the true spirit of toleration which should prevail everywhere and which can be cultivated to great advantage in these rural, social centers. It makes, too, for the fullness of life in rural communities. It makes country life more pleasant and serves in some degree to counteract the strong but regrettable urban trend.

Courtesy and Candor.—There are two extremes in debates and in public discussions which should be equally avoided: The first is that brutal frankness which forgets to be courteous; and the second is that extreme of hypocritical courtesy which forgets to be candid. What is needed everywhere is the candor which is also courteous and the courtesy which is likewise candid. In impulsive youth and in lack of education and culture, brutal candor without courtesy sometimes manifests itself; while courtesy without candor is too often exhibited by shrewd politicians and diplomatic intriguers.

Automobile Parties.—A delightful and profitable occasion could be made by the men of the rural community who are the owners of automobiles, by taking all the children of the community and of the schools, once in a while, for an automobile ride to near or distant parts of the county. Such an occasion would never be forgotten by them. It would be enjoyable to those who give as well as to those who receive, and would have great educational as well as social value. It would bind together both young and old of the community. Occasions like these would also conduce to the good-roads movement so commendable and important throughout the country. The automobile and the consolidation of rural schools, resulting in social centers, are large factors in the good-roads movement.

Full Life or a Full Purse.—The community which

has been centralized socially and educationally may often bring upon itself additional expense to provide the necessary hall, playgrounds, and other conveniences required to realize and to make all of these activities most effective. But this is a local problem which must be tackled and solved by each community for itself. The community where the right spirit prevails will realize that they must make some sacrifices. If a thing is worth while, the proper means must be provided. One cannot have the benefit without paying the cost. It is a question as to which a community will choose: a monotonous, isolated life *with* the accumulation of some money, or an active, enthusiastic, educational, and social life *without* so many dollars. It is really a choice between money with little life on the one hand, and a little less money with more fullness of life on the other. Life, after all, is the only thing worth while, and in progressive communities its enrichment will be chosen at any cost. Here again it is the duty of the teacher to bring about the right spirit and attitude and the right decision in regard to all these important questions.

Organization.—A community which is socially and educationally organized will need a central post office and town hall, a community store, a grain elevator, a church, and possibly other community agencies. All of these things tend to solidify and bring together the people at a common center.

This suggests organization of some kind in the

community. The old grange was good in its ideal; the purpose was to unite and bring people together for mutual help. There should probably be a young men's society of some kind, and an organization of the girls and women of the community. It is true that the matter may be overdone and we may have such a thing as activity merely for the sake of activity. It was Carlyle who said that some people are noted for "fussy littleness and an infinite deal of nothing." The golden mean should apply here as elsewhere.

The Inseparables.—To bring all of these things about requires talent and ingenuity on the part of the leader or leaders; and we come again to the inseparables mentioned in a former chapter. It will require a great personality to organize. The word "great" implies a high standard; and strong personalities, such as are capable of managing a social center, cannot possibly be secured without an adequate inducement in the way of salary. Proper compensation cannot mean sixty, seventy-five, or one hundred dollars a month. It must mean also permanence of position. Again we come face to face with the problem of the teacher in our solution of the problem of rural life and the rural school.

In conclusion it must be said that nothing is too good for the country which is not too good for the city. The rural community must determine to have all these good things at any cost, if it wishes to work out its own salvation.

CHAPTER XI

RURAL SCHOOL SUPERVISION

Important.—Supervision is fully as important as teaching. The supervisor must be, to even a higher degree than the teacher, a strong personality, and this too implies a high standard and an attractive salary. The supervisor or superintendent must be somewhat of an expert in the methods of teaching all the common school subjects. Not only must he understand school discipline and organization in its details, but he must possess the ability to "turn in" and exemplify his qualifications at any time. It will be seen everywhere that the supervisor or superintendent is the expensive person; for, having the elements of leadership, he is in demand in educational positions as well as in outside callings. Consequently it is only by a good financial inducement, as a rule, that a competent supervisor can be retained in the profession.

Supervision Standardizes.—Without the superintendent or supervisor, no common standard can be attained or maintained. It is he who keeps the force up to the line; without him each teacher is a law unto himself and there will be as many standards as there are teachers. Human nature is innately slothful and negligent, and needs the spirit of supervision to keep

it toned up to the necessary pitch. Supervision over a large force of workers of any kind is absolutely necessary to secure efficiency, and to keep service up to a high standard.

Supervision Can Be Overdone. — The necessity for supervision is clearly felt in the city systems. There they have a general superintendent, principals of buildings, and supervisors in various special lines. A system of schools in the city without supervision would simply go to pieces. It would soon cease to be a system, and would become chaotic. It may be, it is true, that in some cities there is too much supervision; it may become acute and pass the line of true efficiency. Indeed, in some cities the red tape may become so complicated and systematized that it becomes an end, and schools and pupils seem to exist for supervisors and systems instead of *vice versa*. It is probably true that the constant presence of a supervisor who is adversely critical may do injury to the efficiency of a good teacher. No one can teach as well under disapprobation as he can where he feels that his hands are free; and so in some places supervision may act as a wet blanket. It may suppress spontaneity, initiative, and real life in the school. But this is only an abuse of a good thing, and probably does not occur frequently. In any event, the exception would only prove the rule. Supervision is as necessary in a system of schools as it is in a railroad or in large industries.

A basket ball team for the girls

A brass band for the young men

ACTIVITIES OF THE CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL

Needed in Rural Schools.—The country partakes of the same isolation in regard to its schools as it does in regard to life in general. This isolation is accentuated where there is little or no supervision. Without it, the necessary stimulus seldom or never touches the life of the teacher or the school. There is little uplift; the school runs along in its ordinary, humdrum fashion, and never measures itself with other schools, and is seldom measured by a supervisor. A poor teacher may be in the chair one term and a good teacher another. The terms are short and the service somewhat disconnected. The whole situation gives the impression to people, pupils, and teacher that education is not of very great value.

No Supervision in Some States.—In some states there is but little supervision. There may be, it is true, a district board, but these are laymen, much better acquainted with the principles of farming than with those of teaching. They have no standards for judging a school and seldom visit one. The selection known as the "Deestrict Skule" illustrates fairly well the ability of the old-time school board to pass judgment upon the professional merits of the teacher.

Nominal Supervision.—In other states there is a county superintendent on part time who has a kind of general but attenuated supervision over all the schools of a county. He is usually engaged in some other line of work—in business, in medicine, in law, in preaching—and can give only a small portion of

his time to the work of superintendence. Indeed, this means only an occasional visit to the school, probably once every one or two years, and such simple and necessary reports as are demanded by the state superintendent or State Board of Education. Such supervision, however honestly performed, accomplishes but little. The superintendent may visit the teacher to-day, but when he returns a year hence, he is likely to find another teacher in charge. Under such circumstances, what can he do? He has seen the teacher at work for half an hour or an hour; he offers a suggestion, or makes some complimentary remark, and goes his way. No one realizes better than he how little he has been able to accomplish. And yet, under existing circumstances he has done all that could be expected.

Some Supervision.—There are, elsewhere, county superintendents who devote their whole time to the work, but who are chosen for short terms and in a political campaign. Very frequently these men are elected for political reasons quite as much as for educational fitness. If a superintendent so elected is politically minded—and I regret to say that sometimes this is the case—he will probably devote much time, energy, and thought to paving the way for reëlection. Expecting to be a candidate for a second term, he will use his best efforts to impress the public mind in his favor. This sometimes results in greater attention to the duties of his office and the consequent betterment of the schools; but, too often, it works in the opposite

direction. Being elected for only two years, he has not the time to carry out any educational policy no matter how excellent his plans may be. Of course many persons chosen in this way make excellent and efficient officers, but the plan is bad. The good superintendent frequently loses out soonest.

An Impossible Task.—Superintendents sometimes have under their jurisdiction from one hundred to two hundred, or even more, schools separated by long distances. The law usually prescribes that the county superintendent shall visit each school at least once a year. This means that practically he will do no more; indeed it is often impossible to do more. It means that his visits must of necessity be a mere perfunctory call of an hour or two's duration with no opportunity to see the same teacher again at work to determine whether or not she is making progress, and whether she is carrying out his instructions. Such so-called supervision, or superintendence, is not supervision at all—how can it be? The superintendent is only a clerical officer who does the work required by law, and makes incidentally an annual social visit to the schools.

The Problem Not Tackled.—Such a situation is another evidence that the states which tolerate the foregoing conditions have not, in any real and earnest manner, attempted to solve the problem of rural school supervision. They have merely let things drift along as they would, not fully realizing the problem or else

trusting to time to come to their aid. Micawber-like, they are waiting for "something to turn up." But such problems will not solve themselves.

City Supervision.—Compare the supervision described above with that which is usually found in cities. There we usually find a general superintendent and assistant superintendents; there are high school principals and a principal at the head of every grade building; there is also a supervisor of manual training, of domestic science, of music, of drawing, and possibly of other subjects. When we consider, too, that the teachers in the city are all close at hand and that the supervisor or superintendent may drop into any room at any time with scarcely a minute's notice, we see the difference between city supervision and country supervision. Add to this the fact that cities attract the strong teachers—the professionally trained teachers, the output of the professional schools—and we can see again how effective supervision becomes in the city as compared with that in the country. In the country we find only one superintendent for a county often as large as some of the older states, and the possibility of visiting each school only about once a year. Here also are the teachers who are not professionalized, as a rule, and who, therefore, need supervision most.

The Purpose of Supervision.—The main purpose of supervision is to bring teachers up to a required standard of excellence in their work and to keep them there.

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It is always the easiest plan to dismiss a teacher who is found deficient, but this is cutting the knot rather than untying it. Efficient and intelligent supervision proceeds along the line of building such a teacher up, of making her strong where she is weak, of giving her initiative where she lacks it, of inculcating good methods where she is pursuing poor ones, of inducing her to come out of her shell where she is backward and diffident. In other words, the great work of the supervisor is to elicit from teachers their most active and hearty response in all positive directions. It should be understood by teachers—and they should know that the superintendent or supervisor indorses the idea—that it is always better to go ahead and blunder than to stand still for fear of blundering; and so, in the presence of a good supervisor, the teacher is not afraid to let herself out. In the conference, later, between herself and her supervisor, mistakes may be pointed out; but, better than this, the best traits of the teacher should be brought to her mind and the weak ones but lightly referred to.

What Is Needed.—What is needed in the rural situation is a county superintendent chosen because of his professional fitness by a county board whose members have been elected at large. This board should be elected on a nonpartisan ticket and so far as possible on a basis of qualification and of good judgment in educational matters. It should hold office for a period of years, some members retiring from the

board annually so that there shall not be, at any time, an entirely new board. This would insure continuity. Another plan for a county board would be to have the presidents of the district boards act as a county board of education. Such a board should be authorized—and indeed this tradition should be established—to select a county superintendent from applicants from outside as well as inside the county. They should be empowered to go anywhere in the country for a superintendent with a reputation in the teaching profession. This is the present plan in cities, and it should be true also in the selection of a county superintendent.

The Term.—The term of office of the county superintendent should be at the discretion of the county board. It should be not less than three or four years —of sufficient length to enable a man to carry out a line of policy in educational administration. The status of the county superintendency should be similar to that of the city superintendency.

Assistants.—The county board should be empowered to provide assistants for the county superintendent. There should be one such assistant for about thirty or thirty-five schools. It is almost impossible for a supervisor to do efficient and effective work if he has more than this number of schools, located, as they are, some distance apart. Provision for such assistants, who should, like the superintendent himself, be experts, is based upon the assumption that

supervision is worth while, and in fact necessary in any system if success is to be attained. If the supervision of thirty-five schools is an important piece of work it should be well done, and a person well qualified for that work should be selected. He should be a person of sympathetic attitude, of high qualifications, and of experience in the field of elementary education. The assistants should be carefully selected by the board on the recommendation of the county superintendent. Poor supervision is little better than none.

The Schools Examined.—The county superintendent and his assistants should give, periodically, oral and written examinations in each school, thus testing the work of both the teacher and the pupils. These examinations should not conform in any perfunctory or red-tape manner to a literally construed course of study. The course of study is a means and not an end, and should be, at all points and times, elastic and adaptable. To make pupils fit the course of study instead of making the course of study fit the pupils is the old method of the Procrustean bed—if the person is not long enough for it he is stretched; if too long, a piece is cut off. Any examination or tests which would wake up mind and stimulate education in the neighborhood may be resorted to; but it should be remembered that examinations are likewise a means and not an end.

Some years ago when I was a county superintendent

I tried the plan of giving such tests in any subject to classes that had completed a definite portion of that subject and arrived at a good stopping place. If, for example, the teacher announced that his class had acquired a thorough knowledge of the multiplication table, I gave a searching test upon that subject and issued a simple little certificate to the effect that the pupil had completed it. These little certificates acted like stakes put down along the way, to give incentive, direction, and definiteness to the educative processes, and to stimulate a reasonable class spirit or individual rivalry. I meet these pupils occasionally now—they are to-day grown men and women—and they retain in their possession these little colored certificates which they still highly prize.

One portion of my county was populated almost entirely by Scandinavians, and here a list of fifty to a hundred words was selected which Scandinavian children always find it difficult to pronounce. At the first trial many or most of the children mispronounced a large percentage of them. I then announced that, the next time I visited the school, I would test the pupils again on these words and others like them, and issue "certificates of correct pronunciation" to all who were entitled to them. I found, on the next visit, that nearly all the children could secure these certificates. These tests created a great impetus in the direction of correct pronunciation and language. Some teachers, from mistaken kindness,

had been accustomed to refrain from correcting the children on such words, but as superintendent I found that both the parents and the children wished drill in pronunciation and were gratified at their success. This is only a sample. I would advocate the giving of tests, or examinations, on any subject in the school likely to lead to good results and to stimulate the minds of the pupils in the right direction. The county superintendent and his assistants might agree to lay the accent or the emphasis on different subjects, or lines of work, in different years.

Keep Down Red Tape.—In all the work of supervision, the formal part—the accounting and reporting part—should be kept simple; the tendency in administrative offices is too often in the direction of complexity and red tape. Wherever there is form merely for the sake of form, it is well worth while to sound a note of warning against it.

Help the Social Centers.—The county superintendent and his assistants can be of inestimable value in all the work of the social centers. They should advise with school boards in regard to consolidation and other problems agitating the community. They should lend a helping hand to programs that are being carried out in any part of the county. They should give lectures themselves at such social centers and, if asked, should help the local communities and local committees in every way within their power.

Conclusion.—The problem, then, of superintend-

ence is, we conclude, one of the large and important problems awaiting solution in rural life and in rural schools. It is the binding force that will help to unify all the educational activities of the county. It is one of the chief stimulating and uplifting influences in rural education. As in the case of most other school problems, the constant surprise is that the people have not awakened sooner to the realization of its importance and to an honest and earnest attempt at its solution.

CHAPTER XII

LEADERSHIP AND COÖPERATION

The Real Leader.—Real leadership is a scarce and choice article; true leaders are few and far between. The best kind of leader is not one who attempts to be at the head of every movement and to do everything himself, but rather he who makes the greatest number of people active in his cause. It frequently happens that the more a leader does himself, the less his followers are inclined to do. The more active he is, the more passive they are likely to become. As teaching is causing others to know and react educationally, so genuine leadership is causing others to become active in the direction of the leader's purpose, or aim. Some who pose as leaders seek to be conspicuous in every movement, merely to attract attention to themselves. They bid for direct and immediate recognition instead of being content with the more remote, indirect, but truer and more substantial reward of recognition through their followers who are active in their leader's cause. The poor leader does not think that there is glory enough for all, and so he monopolizes all he can of it, leaving the remainder to those who probably do the greater part

of the work and deserve as much credit as he. The spectacular football player who ignores the team and team work, in order to attract attention by his individual plays, is not the best leader or the best player. The real leader will frequently be content to see things somewhat poorly done or not so well done, in order that his followers may pass through the experience of doing them. It is only by having such experiences that followers are enabled, in turn, to become leaders.

Teaching vs. Telling.—As has been shown in an earlier chapter, the lack of leadership is frequently exhibited in the classroom when the teacher, instead of inducing self-activity and self-expression on the part of the pupils, proceeds to recite the whole lesson himself. He asks leading questions and then, at the slightest hesitation on the part of a pupil, he suggests the answer; he asks another leading question from another point of view; he puts words into the mouth of the pupil who is trying in a pitiable way to recite; and ends by covering the topic all over with words, words, words of his own. This is poor leadership on the part of the teacher and gives no opportunity for real coöperation on the part of the pupils. The teacher takes all the glory of reciting, and leaves the pupil without an opportunity or the reward of self-expression.

Enlisting the Coöperation of Pupils.—All children —and in fact all people—if approached or stimulated

in the proper way—like to *do* things, to perform services for others. A pupil always considers it a compliment to be asked by his teacher to do something for him, if the relations between the teacher and pupil are normal and cordial. This must, of course, be the case if any truly educative response is to be elicited. Socrates once said that a person cannot learn from one whom he does not love. The relation between pupil and teacher should be one of mutual love and respect, if the educational process is to obtain. If this relation does not exist, the first duty of the teacher is to bring it about. Sometimes this is difficult. I once heard a teacher say that it took him about three weeks to establish this relation between himself and one of his pupils. He finally invited the pupil out hunting with him one Saturday, and after that they were the best of friends. The pupil became one of the leaders in his school and his coöperation was secured from that time forward. In this instance the teacher showed marked leadership as well as practical knowledge of psychology and pedagogy. Francis Murphy, the great temperance orator, understood both leadership and coöperation, for he always, as he said, made it a point to approach a man from the "south side."

A pupil, if approached in the right way, will do anything in his power for his teacher. There may be times when wood or fuel must be provided, when the room must be swept and cleaned, when little repairs

become necessary, or an errand must be performed. In such situations, if the teacher is a real leader and if his school and he are *en rapport*, volunteers will vie with each other for the privilege of carrying out the teacher's wishes. This would indicate genuine leadership and coöperation.

Placing Responsibility.—Whether in school or some other station in life, there is scarcely anything that so awakens and develops the best that is in either man or child as the placing of responsibility. Every person is educated and made greater according to the measure of responsibility that is given to him and that he is able to live up to. While it is true that too great a measure of responsibility might be given, this is no reasonable excuse for withholding it altogether for fear the burden would be too great. There is a wide middle ground between no responsibility and too much of it, and it is in this field that leadership and coöperation can be displayed to much advantage. The greater danger lies in not giving sufficient responsibility to children and youths. It is well known that, in parts of our country, where men who have been proved to be, or are strongly suspected of being crooked, have been placed upon the bench to mete out justice, they have usually risen to the occasion and to their better ideals, and have not betrayed the trust reposed in them, or the responsibility placed upon them. There is probably no finer body of men in America than our railroad engineers;

and while it may be true that they are *picked* in a measure, it is also true that their responsible positions and work bring out their best manhood. As they sit or stand at the throttle, with hand upon the lever and eyes on the lookout for danger, and as they feel the heart-throbs of their engine drawing its precious freight of a thousand souls through the darkness and the storm, they cannot help realizing that this is real life invested with great responsibilities; and with this thought ever before them, they become men who can be trusted anywhere. There is little doubt that Abraham Lincoln's mettle was tempered to the finest quality in the fires of the great struggle from 1860 to 1865, when every hour of his waking days was fraught with the greatest responsibility.

How People Remain Children. — If children and young people are not given responsibilities they are likely to remain children. The old adage, "Don't send a boy to mill," is thoroughly vicious if applied beyond a narrow and youthful range. In some neighborhoods the fathers even when of an advanced age retain entire control of the farm and of all activities, and the younger generation are called the "boys," and, what is worse, are considered such till forty years of age or older—in fact as long as the fathers live and are active. A "boy" is called "Johnnie," "Jimmie," or "Tommie," and is never chosen to do jury duty or to occupy any position connected in the local public mind with a man's work. The father in such cases is

not a good leader, for he has given no responsibility to, and receives no genuine coöperation from, his sons, who are really man grown, but who are regarded, even by themselves, from habit and suggestion, as children. If these middle-aged men should move to another part of the country they would be compelled to stand upon their own feet, and would be regarded as men among men. They would be called *Mr.* Jones, *Mr.* Smith, and *Mr.* Brown, instead of diminutive and pet names; and, what is better, they would regard themselves as men. This would be a wholesome and stimulating suggestion. Hence Horace Greeley's advice to young men, to "Go West," would prove beneficial in more ways than one.

This state of affairs is illustrated on a large scale by the Chinese life and civilization. From time immemorial the Chinese have been taught to regard themselves as children, and the emperor as the common father of all. The head of the family is the head as long as he lives and all his descendants are mere sons and daughters. When he dies he is the object of worship. This custom has tended to influence in a large measure the thought and life of China and to keep the Chinese, for untold generations, a childlike and respectful people. Whatever may come to pass under the new regime, recently established in their country, they have been, since the dawn of history, a passive people, the majority of whom have not been honored with any great measure of responsibility.

On the Farm.—Such lessons from history, written large, are as applicable in rural life as elsewhere. Coöperation and profit-sharing are probably the key to the solution of the labor problem. Many industrial leaders in various lines, notably Mr. Henry Ford in his automobile factories in Detroit, have come to the conclusion that coöperation, or some kind of profit-sharing by the rank and file of the workers, is of mutual benefit to employer and laborer. The interest of workers must be enlisted for their own good as well as for the good of society at large. It induces the right attitude toward work on the part of the worker, and the right attitude of employer and employee toward each other. This leads to the solidarity of society and the integrity of the social bond. It tends to establish harmony and to bring contentment to both parties.

Renters.—The renter of a farm must have sufficient interest in it and in all its activities to improve it in every respect, rather than to allow it to deteriorate by getting out of it everything possible, and then leaving it, like a squeezed orange, to repeat the operation elsewhere. A farm, in order to yield its best and to increase in production and value, must be managed with care, foresight, and scientific understanding. There must be, among other things, a careful rotation of crops and the rearing of good breeds of animals of various kinds. But these things cannot be intrusted to the mere renter or the hired man who is nothing more. These

are not sufficiently interested. The man who successfully manages a farm must be interested in it and in its various phases, whether he be a renter or a worker. He must be careful, watchful, industrious, intelligent, and a lover of domestic animals; otherwise the farm will go backward and the stock will not thrive and be productive of profits. The man who drives a farm to a successful issue must be a leader, and, if he is not the owner, he must coöperate with the owner in order that there may be interest, which is the great essential.

The Owner.—If the farm is operated by the owner himself and his family, there is still greater need of leadership on the part of the father and of coöperation on the part of all. Money and profits are not the only motives or the only results and rewards that come to a family in rural life. As the children grow up to adult life, both boys and girls, for their own education and development in leadership and in coöperation, should be given some share in the business, some interest which they can call their own, and whose success and increase will depend on their attention, care, and industry. That father is a wise leader who can enlist the active coöperation of all his family for the good of each and of all. Such leadership and coöperation are the best forms and means of education, and lead inevitably to good citizenship. How often do we see a grasping, churlish father whose leadership is maintained by fear and force and whose

family fade away, one by one, as they come to adolescence. There is no cementing force in such a household, and the centrifugal forces which take the place of true leadership and cordial coöperation soon do their work.

The Teacher as a Leader.—We have already spoken of the teacher as the natural leader of the activities of a social center, or of a community. In such situations the teacher should be a real leader, not one who wishes or attempts to be the direct and actual leader in every activity, but one "who gets things done" through the secondary leadership of a score or more of men, boys, and girls. The leader in a consolidated district, or social center, who should attempt to bring all the glory upon himself by immediate leadership would be like the teacher who insists on doing all the reciting for his pupils. That would be a false and short-lived leadership. Hence the teacher who is a true leader will keep himself somewhat in the background while, at the same time, he is the hidden mainspring, the power behind the throne. "It is the highest art to conceal art." Fitch, in his lectures on teaching, says that the teacher and the leader should "keep the machinery in the background." The teacher should start things going by suggestion and keep them going by his presence, his attitude, and his silent participation.

Too much participation and direction are fatal to the active coöperation and secondary leadership of others.

Hence the teacher will bring about, in his own good time and way, the organization of a baseball team under the direction of a captain chosen by the boys. The choice, it is true, may probably be inspired by the teacher. The same would take place in regard to every game, sport, or activity, mental, social, or physical, in the community. The danger always is that the initial leader may become too dominant. It is hard on flesh and blood to resist the temptation to be lionized. But it is incomparably better to have partial or almost total failures under self-government than to be governed by a benevolent and beneficent autocrat. And so it is much better that boys and girls work out their own salvation under leaders of their own choice, than to be told to organize, and to do thus and so. It requires a rare power of self-control in a real leader to be compelled to witness only partial success and crude performance under secondary leaders groping toward success, and still be silent and patient. But this is the true process of education—self-activity and self-government.

Self-activity and Self-government.—In order to develop initiative, which is the same thing, practically, as leadership, opportunity must be given for free self-activity. Children and adults alike, if they are to grow, must be induced to *do*. It is always better to go ahead and blunder than to stand still for fear of blundering. Many kind mothers fondly wish—and frequently attempt to enforce their wish—that chil-

dren should learn how to swim without going into the water. Children see the folly of this and, in order not to disturb the calm and peace of the household, slip away to a neighboring creek or swimming-hole, for which they ever after retain the most cherished memories. In later years when all danger is over these grown-up children smilingly and jokingly reveal the mysteries of the trick! Children cannot learn to climb trees without climbing trees, or to ride calves and colts without the real animals. Some chances must be taken by parents and guardians, and more chances are usually taken by children than their guardians ever hear of. Accidents will happen, it is true, but in the wise provision of Mother Nature the world moves on through these persistent and instinctive self-activities.

Self-activity is manifested on a larger scale in society and among nations and peoples. Civilization is brought about through self-activity and coöperation. It were better for the Filipinos to civilize themselves as much as possible than that we impose civilization upon them. It is better that Mexico bring peace into her own household, than that we take the leadership and enforce order among her people. When the Irish captain said to his soldiers, "If you don't obey willingly I'll make you obey willingly," he fused into one the military and the truly civic and educational conceptions. An individual or a nation must energize from within outward in order to truly ex-

press itself and thus develop in the best sense. Hence in any community the development of self-expression, self-activity, and coöperation under true leadership is conducive to the highest type of individuality and of citizenship.

Taking Laws upon One's Self.—It is under proper leadership and coöperation that children and young people are induced to take laws upon themselves. It is always a joy to a parent or a teacher when a pupil expresses himself with some emotion to the effect that such and such a deed is an "outrage," or "fine" as the case may be. It is an indication that he has adopted a life principle which he means to live by, and that it has been made his own to such an extent that he expresses and commits himself upon it with such feeling. Moralization consists in just this process—the taking upon one's self of a bundle of good life principles. Under the right kind of leadership and coöperation this moralizing process grows most satisfactorily. Children then take upon themselves laws and become self-governing and law-abiding.

An Educational Column.—One of the best means of creating an atmosphere and spirit of education and culture in a community is to conduct an "educational column" in the local newspaper. The teacher as a real leader in the community could furnish the matter for such a column once every two weeks or once a month, and, before long, if he is the leader we speak

of, the people will begin to look eagerly for this column; they will turn to it first on receiving their paper. Here items of interest on almost any subject might be discussed. The column need not be limited narrowly to technically educational topics. The author of such a column could thus create and build up in a community the right kind of traditions and a good spirit, tone, and temper generally. His influence would be potent outside the schoolroom and he would have in his power the shaping and the guiding of the social, or community mind. It is wonderful what can be done in this way by a prudent, intelligent, and interesting writer. The community soon will wish, after the column has been read through, that he had written more. This would be an encouraging sign.

All Along the Educational Line.—The kind of leadership and coöperation indicated in this chapter should be exemplified through the entire common-school system. It should obtain between the state superintendent and the county superintendents; between the county superintendents and their deputies, or assistants on the one hand and the principals of schools on the other; between principals and teachers; and between teachers and pupils. It should exist between all of these officials and the people variously organized for social and educational betterment. Then there would be a "long pull, a strong pull, and a pull all together" for the solution of the problems of rural life and the rural school.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FARMER AND HIS HOME

Farming in the Past.—In the past, successful farming was easier than it is at present or is destined to be in the future. In the prairie regions of the great central West, the virgin and fertile soil, the large acreage of easy cultivation, and the good prices made success inevitable. Indeed, these conditions were thrust upon the fortunate farmer.

But those days are passed. Increased population is reducing the acreage and cultivation, while it is eliminating the surplus fertility; competition and social and economic pressure are reducing the margin of profits. Thrift, good management, and brains are becoming increasingly important factors in successful farming.

Old Conceit and Prejudice.—Twenty years ago, when the agricultural colleges were taking shape and attempting to impress their usefulness upon the farmer, the latter was inclined to assume a derisive attitude, and to refer to their graduates as "silk-stocking farmers"—or, as one farmer put it, "theatrical" sort of fellows, meaning *theoretical!* In the farming of the future, however, the agricultural college

and its influence are bound to play a large part. There is plenty of room on a good farm of one hundred and sixty acres for the best thinking and the most careful planning. Foresight and ingenuity of the rarest kinds are demanded there.

We wish to enumerate, and discuss in brief, some of the important points of vantage to be watched and carefully guarded, if farm life, which means rural life, is to be pleasant and profitable. If rural life is to retain its attractions and its people, it must be both of these. Let us, in this chapter, investigate some things which, although apart from the school and education in any technical sense, are truly educative, in the best sense.

Leveling Down.—One thing that sometimes impresses the close observer who is visiting in the country and in farm homes is that there exists in some rural localities a kind of "leveling down" process. People become accommodated to their rather quiet and unexciting surroundings. Their houses and barns, in the way of repairs and improvements, are allowed gradually to succumb to the tooth of time and the beating of the elements. This process is so slow and insidious that those who live in the midst of it scarcely notice the decay that is taking place. Hence it continues to grow worse until the farm premises assume an unattractive and dilapidated appearance. Weeds grow up around the buildings and along the roads, so slowly, that they remain unnoticed and hence

uncut—when half an hour's work would suffice to destroy them all, to the benefit of the farm and the improvement of its appearance.

In the country it is very easy, as we have said, to "level down." People live in comparative isolation; imitation, comparison, and competition enter but little into their thoughts and occupations. In the city it is otherwise. People live in close proximity to each other, and one enterprising person can start a neighborhood movement for the improvement of lawns and houses. There is more conference, more criticism and comparison, more imitation. In the city there is a kind of compulsion to "level up."

When one moves from a large active center to a smaller one, the life tendency is to accommodate one's self to his environment; while if one moves from a small, quiet place to a larger and more active center, the life tendency is to level up. It is, of course, fortunate for us that we are able to accommodate ourselves to our environment and to derive a growing contentment from the process. The prisoner may become so content in his cell that he will shed tears when he is compelled to leave it for the outer world where he must readjust himself. The college man, over whom there came a feeling of desolation on settling down in a small country village with one store, comes eventually to find contentment, sitting on the counter or on a drygoods box, swapping stories with others like himself who have leveled down to a very circum-

scribed life and living. Leveling down may be accomplished without effort or thought, but eternal vigilance is the price of leveling up.

Premises Indicative.—A farmer is known by the premises he keeps, just as a person is known by the company he keeps. If a man is thrifty it will find expression in the orderliness of his place. If he is intelligent and inventive it will show in the appointments and adaptations everywhere apparent, inside and outside the buildings. If the man and his family have a fine sense of beauty and propriety, an artistic or æsthetic sense, there will be evidences of cleanliness and simple beauty everywhere—in the architecture, in the painting, in the pictures, and the carpets, in the kinds and positions of the trees and shrubbery, and in the general neatness and cleanliness of the premises. It is not so necessary that people possess much, but it is important that they make much of what they do possess. The exquisite touch on all things is analogous to the flavor of our food—it is as important for appetite and for nourishment as the food itself.

Conveniences by Labor-saving Devices.—If there are ingenuity and the power of ordinary invention in common things, system and devices for saving labor will be evident everywhere. The motor will be pressed into service in various ways. There will be a place for everything, and everything will be in its place. Head work and invention, rather than mere imitation, characterize the activities of the master.

Eggs in Several Baskets.—The day is past when success may be attained by raising wheat alone. This was, of course, in days gone by, the easiest and cheapest crop to produce. It was also the crop that brought the largest returns in the shortest time. Wheat raising was merely a summer's job, with a prospective winter's outing in some city center. It was and is still the lazy farmer's trick. It was an effort similar to that of attempting the invention of a perpetual motion machine; it was an attempt, if not to get something for nothing, at least to get something at the lowest cost, regardless of the future. But nature cannot be cheated, and the modern farmer has learned or is learning rapidly, that he must rotate and diversify his crops if he would succeed in the long run. Consequently he has begun rotation. He also replenishes his soil with nitrogen-producing legumes, along with corn planting and with summer fallowing. He engages in the raising of chickens, hogs, cattle, and horses. This diversification saves him from total loss in case of a bad year in one line. The farmer does not carry all his eggs in one basket. A bad year with one kind of crops may be a good year with some other. Diversification also makes farming an all-year occupation, every part of which is bringing a good return, instead of being a job with an income for the summer and an outlay for the winter. Live stock, sheep, hogs, and cattle grow nights, Sundays, and winters as well as at other times,

and so the profits are accumulating all the year round.

The Best is the Cheapest.—The modern farmer also realizes that it takes no more, nor indeed as much, to feed and house the best kinds of animals than it does to keep the scrub varieties. In all of this there is a large field for study and investigation. But one must be interested in his animals and understand them. They should know his voice and he should know their needs and their habits. As in every other kind of work there must be a reasonable interest; otherwise it cannot be an occupation which will make life happy and successful.

Good Work.—The good farmer has the *feel* and the habit of good work. The really successful man in any calling or profession is he who does his work conscientiously and as well as he can. The sloven becomes the bungler, and the bungler is on the high road to failure. It is always a pleasant thing to see a man do his work well and artistically. It is the habit, the policy, the attitude of thus doing that tell in the long run. A farmer may by chance get a good crop by seeding on unplowed stubble land, but he must feel that he is engaged in the business of trying to cheat himself, like the boy playing solitaire—he does not let his right hand know what his left hand is doing. The good farmer is an artist in his work, while the poor farmer is a veritable bungler—blaming his tools and Nature herself for his failures.

Good Seed and Trees.—The successful farmer knows from study and experience that only healthy seed and healthy animals will produce good grain and strong animals after their kind. He does not try tricks on Nature. He selects the best kinds of trees and shrubbery and when these are planted he takes care of them. He realizes that what is worth sowing and planting is worth taking care of.

A Good Caretaker.—The successful and intelligent farmer keeps all his buildings, sheds, and fences in good repair and well painted. He is not penny-wise and pound-foolish. He knows the value of paint from an economic and financial point of view as well as from an artistic and æsthetic one. Knowing these things, and from an ingrained feeling and habit, he sees to it that all his machinery and tools are under good cover, and are not exposed to the gnawing tooth of the elements. This habit and attitude of the man are typical and make for success as well as for contentment. As it is not the saving of a particular dollar that makes a man thrifty or wealthy, but the *habit* of saving dollars; so it is not the taking care of this or that piece of machinery, or that particular building, but the habit of doing such things that leads him to success.

Family Coöperation.—Such a man will also enlist the interest and the active coöperation of his sons and daughters by giving them property or interests which they can call their own; he will make them, in a

measure, co-partners with him on the farm. There could be no better way of developing in them their best latent talents. It would result in mutual profit and, what is better, in mutual love and happiness. One of the greatest factors in a true education is to be interested, self-active, and busy toward a definite and worthy end. Under such circumstances both the parents and the children might be benefited by taking short courses in the nearest agricultural college; and a plan of giving each his turn could be worked out to the interest and profit of all the family. Such a family would become local leaders in various enterprises.

An Ideal Life.—It would seem that such an intelligent and successful farmer and his family could lead an ideal life. Every life worth while must have work, disappointments, and reverses. But work—reasonable work—is a blessing and not a curse. Work is an educator, a civilizer, a sanctifier.

A family like that described might in the course of a few years possess most of the modern conveniences. The telephone, the daily mail, the automobile, and other inventions are at hand, in the country as well as in the city. The best literature of to-day and of all time is available. Music and art are easily within reach. With these advantages any rural family may have a happy home. This is more than most people in the cities can have. More and more of our people should turn in the future to this quiet but happy and ideal country life.

CHAPTER XIV

THE RURAL RENAISSANCE

Darkest Before the Dawn.—Prior to the present widespread discussion, which it is hoped will lead to a rural renaissance, the condition and the prospects of country life and the country school looked dark and discouraging. Country life seemed to be passing into the shadow and the storm. It seemed as if the country was being not only deserted but forgotten. The urban trend, as we have seen, moved on apace. Farms were being deserted or, if cultivated at all, were passing more and more into the hands of renters. The owners were farming by proxy. This meant decreased production and impoverished soil. It meant one-crop, or small-grain farming; it meant a class of renters or tenants with only temporary homes, and hence with only a partial interest. The inevitable result would be an impoverished rural life and poor rural schools. Without a realization of the seriousness of the situation and the trend on the part of the people at large, all these conditions prevailed to a greater or less extent. The people seemed unaware of the fact that rural life was not keeping pace with the progress of the world around. In New England whole

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districts were practically deserted, and her abandoned farms told the tale. In Virginia and in most of the older states similar conditions existed. The people migrated either to the cities or to the newer and cheaper agricultural regions of the West.

The Awakening.—But the time came when the newer lands were not so available and when social and economic pressure forced the whole problem of rural life upon the attention of the nation. Difficulty in adjustment to surroundings always constitutes a problem, and a problem always arouses thought. When our adjustment is easy and successful it is effected largely through habit; but when it is obstructed or thwarted, thought and reason must come to the rescue. Investigation, comparison, and reflection are then drafted for a solution. This is what happened a few years ago. The whole situation, it is true, had been in mind previously, but only in a half conscious or subconscious way. It was being felt or sensed, more or less clearly, that there was something wrong, that there was a great unsupplied need, in rural life; but the thought had no definite shape. The restiveness, the restlessness, was there but no distinct and articulate voices gave utterance to any definite policy or determination. There was no clearly formulated consensus of thought as to what ought to be done. Prior to this time the thought of the people had not been focused on country life at all. The attention of the rural districts was not on them-

selves; they were not really self-conscious of their condition or that there was any important problem before them. But not many years ago, owing to various movements, which were both causes and effects, the whole country began to be aroused to the importance of the subjects which I have been discussing. The Committee of Twelve on Rural Schools appointed by the National Educational Association had reported the phases of the rural life problem in 1897; but many declarations and reports of that kind are necessary to stir the whole country. Hence no decisive movement, even in rural education, became noticeable for several years. But this report did much good; it not only formulated educational thought and policy in regard to the subject but it also awakened thought and discussion outside of the teaching profession.

The Agricultural Colleges.—The agricultural colleges and experimental stations in the several states had also been active for some years and had formulated a body of knowledge in regard to agricultural principles and methods. They had distributed this information widely among the farmers of the country. The latter, at first, looked askance at these colleges and their propaganda, and often refused to accept their suggestions and advice on the ground that it was "mere theory," and that farmers could not be taught practical agriculture by mere "book men" and "theorizers." The practical man often despises theory, not realizing that practice without theory

is usually blind. But the growing science of agriculture was working like a leaven for the improvement of farm life in all its phases, and to-day the agricultural colleges and experiment stations are the well-springs of information for practical farmers everywhere. Bulletins of information are published and distributed regularly, and farmers are being brought into closer and closer touch with these institutions.

Conventions.—During this awakening period, conventions of various kinds are held, which give the farmers an opportunity to hear and to participate in discussions pertaining to the problems with which they are wrestling. They come together in district, county, or state conventions, and the result has been that a class consciousness, an *esprit de corps*, is being developed. Farmers hear and see bigger and better things; their world is enlarged and their minds are stimulated; they are induced to think in larger units. Thought, like water, seeks its level, and in conventions of this kind the individual "levels up." He goes home inspired to do better and greater things, and spreads the new gospel among his neighbors. At the conventions he hears a variety of topics discussed, including good roads, house plans, sanitation, schools, and others too numerous to mention.

Other Awakening Agencies.—The agricultural paper, which practically every farmer takes and which every farmer should take, brings to the farm home each week

the most modern findings on all phases of country life. The rural free delivery and the parcel post bring the daily mail to the farmer's door. The rural telephone is becoming general, and also the automobile and other rapid and convenient modes of communication and transportation. All these things have helped to develop a clearer consciousness of country life, its problems and its needs.

The Farmer in Politics.—Add to all the foregoing considerations the fact that, in every state legislature and in Congress, the number of rural representatives is constantly increasing, and we see clearly that the country districts are awakening to a realization not only of their needs but of their rights. All of these conditions have helped to turn the eyes of the whole people, in state and nation, to long neglected problems.

The National Commission.—So the various agencies and factors enumerated above and others besides, all working more or less consciously and all conspiring together, finally resulted in the appointment of a National Commission on Rural Life, the results and findings of which were made the subject of a special message from the president to Congress in 1909. The report of the commission was issued from the Government Printing Office in Washington as Document Number 705, and should be read by every farmer in the country. This commission was the resultant of many forces exerted around family firesides, in the schoolroom, in the press, on the plat-

form, in conventions, in legislatures, and in the halls of Congress. For the first time in this country, the conditions and possibilities of rural life were made the subjects of investigation and report to a national body. Thus the Commission became thenceforth a potent cause of the attention and impetus since given to the problems we are discussing.

Mixed Farming.—In recent years, too, what may be called "scientific farming" has become a decided "movement" and is now very extensively practiced. This includes diversified farming, rotation of crops, stock raising, the breeding of improved stock, better plowing, and a host of matters connected with the farmer's occupation. Thus farming is becoming neither a job nor an avocation, but a genuine vocation, or profession. It requires for its success all the brains, all the ingenuity, all the attention and push that an intelligent man can give it; and, withal, it promises all the variety, the interest, the happiness, and the success that any profession can offer.

Now Before the Country.—The movement in behalf of a richer rural life and of better rural schools is now before the country. It is the subject of discussion everywhere. It is in the limelight; the literature on the subject is voluminous; books without number, on all phases of the subject, are coming from the press. Educational papers and magazines, and even the lay press, are devoting unstinted space to discussions on country life and the rural school.

The country has the whole question "on the run," with a fair prospect of an early capture. On pages 182–186 we give a bibliography of a small portion of the literature on these questions which has come out recently.

Educational Extension.—Within the last few years the movement known as "extension work," connected with the educational institutions, has had a rapid growth. The state universities, agricultural colleges, and normal schools in almost every state are doing their utmost to carry instruction and education in a variety of forms to communities beyond their walls. They are vying with each other in their extension departments, in extra-mural service of every possible kind. In many places institutions are even furnishing musical performances and other forms of entertainment at cost, in competition with the private bureaus, thus saving communities the profits of the bureau and the expense of the middlemen. The University of Wisconsin has been in recent years the leader in this extension work. Minnesota, and most of the central and western states are active in the campaign of carrying education and culture to outlying communities. Wisconsin, Minnesota, and North Dakota have recently pooled their forces for some exchange of service in extension work.

Library Extension Work.—In Wisconsin, the state library is under the direction of the university extension department, and collections of books, which may

be retained for a definite length of time, may be secured by any town or community in the state. In this way a library may do excellent service.

Some Frotn.—No doubt some froth will be produced by the stirring of the waters which are moving in some places with whirlpool rapidity. There is considerable sound and fury, no doubt, in the discussions and in the things attempted in these uplifting movements. There is a considerable amount of smoke in proportion to the fire beneath. But, even with the froth, the noise, and the smoke, there is some latent power, some energy, beneath and behind it all. The main thing is that the power, the energy, the thought, the enthusiasm of the nation have been started on the right way. We can discount and overlook the vagaries and foibles which will undoubtedly play around the outskirts of the movement. Every new movement shows similar phenomena. Much will be said, written, and done which is mere surface display. But while these may do little good, they will do no harm and are indicative of the inner and vital determination of the people to confront the difficulties.

Thought and Attitude.—Our thought and our attitude make any kind of work or any kind of position desirable and worthy, or the reverse. Many vicious leaders poison the minds of workers and make them dissatisfied with their work and their employers by suggesting a wrong spirit and attitude. We do not advocate passive submission to wrongs; nor on

the other hand do we think that the interests of the laborer are to be subserved by infusing into his mind jealousy and envy and discontent with his lot.

A young man goes through the practice and games of football, enduring exertion and pain which he would not allow any other person to force upon him; at the same time, he has a song in his heart. On a camping trip a person will submit to rigors and privations which he would think intolerable at home. Whatever is socially fashionable is done with pleasure; the mind is the great factor. If one is interested in his work, it is pleasant—indeed more enjoyable than play; but if there is no interest it is all drudgery and pain. The attitude, the motive, the will make all the difference in the world. In the rural renaissance, farm life may become more and more fashionable. This is by no means impossible. Country life has no such rigors as the football field or the outing in the wilds. When as a people we have passed from the sensuous and erotic wave on the crest of which we seem at present to be carried along, we can with profit, intellectually, morally, socially, and physically, "go forth under the open sky and list to Nature's teachings." Everything except the present glare of excitement beckons back to the land, back to the country. Whether as a people we shall effectively check the urban trend, will, in the not distant future, test the self-control, the foresight, the wisdom, and the character of the manhood and womanhood of this nation.

CHAPTER XV

A GOOD PLACE AFTER ALL

Not Pessimistic.—Some of the early chapters of this book may have left the impression that a restoration, or rejuvenation, of country life, such as will reverse the urban trend and make rural life the more attractive by comparison, is difficult if not impossible. It is difficult we grant; but we do not wish to leave the impression that such is improbable, much less impossible. We were simply facing the truth on the dark, or negative, side, and were attempting to give reasons for conditions and facts which have been everywhere apparent. If there are two sides to a question both should be presented as they really are. It is always as useless and as wrong to minimize as it is to exaggerate, and we were simply accounting for facts.

We did not mean that there is no hope. The first essential in the solution of any problem or in the improvement of any condition is to get the condition clearly and accurately in mind—to *conceive* it exactly as it is.

There is no doubt that the city, with its material

splendor and its social life, has attractions; but if we turn to rural life, we shall find, if we go below the surface of human nature, the strongest appeals to our deeper and more abiding interests. The surface of things and the present moment are near to us, and powerful in the way of motivation. These, however, are the aspects of human environment which appeal most strongly to the child, to the savage, and to the uneducated person. If we are optimists, believing that the race is progressing, and that our own people and country are progressing as rapidly as or more rapidly than any other, we must believe that motives which appeal to our deeper, saner, and more disciplined nature will win out in the long run. Let us see, then, what some of the appeals to this saner stratum of human nature, in behalf of rural life, are.

Fewer Hours of Labor than Formerly.—The hours of labor have been reduced everywhere. In the olden time labor was done by slaves or serfs, and neither their bodies nor their time was their own. They labored when, where, and as long as their masters dictated. Even a generation ago there was little said, and there was no uniformity, as to how long a workingman should labor. In busy seasons or on important pieces of work, he labored as long as the light of day permitted. It was from sun to sun, and often long after the sun had disappeared from the western horizon. Sixteen hours was no uncommon day for him. Under such conditions there was no room for

mental, social, or spiritual advancement. Later, the hours were reduced to a maximum of fourteen. This proved to be so satisfactory that laws were passed providing for a further dec se in hours. This standardizing of the day of labor, while not general in the country, had its effect. The twelve-hour day, while still long, was a decided betterment over the sixteen-hour day. There was beginning to be a little possible margin for social, mental, and recreational activity. But the twelve-hour day must inevitably get the better of the human system and of the spirit of man. It is too long and too steady a grind, and habit and long hours soon tell their story. They inevitably lead to the condition of the "man with the hoe."

As improvements in machinery were perfected and inventions of all kinds multiplied and spread both in the factory and on the farm, the ten-hour day was ushered in. It was inevitable in this age of inventions and improvements. Capital had these inventions and improvements in its possession and a laboring man could now do twice as much with the same labor as formerly. But society as a whole could not assent to the theory and the practice that the capitalist, the owner of the machines, should reap all the advantages; and so, while the hours were still further reduced, the wages were increased, thus more nearly equalizing the benefits accruing to employer and employed. With the aid of inventions the worker, on

the average, can do more in the short day of eight or ten hours than he did formerly in the sixteen-hour day. It is not contended, however, that every laborer actually does this. This phase of the question is a large factor in the labor problem. But from the point of view of the average man and of society, labor with the aid of machinery can produce probably twice as much as it produced formerly without that aid. This fact has had great influence upon industrial life everywhere, and makes for increased opportunities and growth.

The Mental Factor Growing.—The trend alluded to above implies that the mental factor is growing larger and larger in occupations of all kinds. Success is becoming more and more dependent on knowledge, ingenuity, prudence, and foresight. Especially is this true on the farm. There is scarcely any calling that demands or can make use of such varied talents. All fields of knowledge may be drawn upon and utilized, from the weather signals to the most recent findings and conclusions of science and philosophy. As the hours of labor both in the factory and on the farm are shortened still more—as is possible—the hours of study, of play, and of social converse will be lengthened. Indeed this is one of the by-problems of civilization and progress—to see that leisure hours are profitably spent for the welfare of the individual. In any event, the prospect of reasonable hours and of social and cultural opportunities in rural life is growing from day to day. The intelligent man with modern

machinery and ordinary capital, if he has made some scientific study of agriculture, need have no fear of not living a successful and happy life on the farm. A knowledge of his calling in all its aspects, with the aid of modern machinery, and with sobriety, thrift, and industry, will bring a kind of life to both adults and children that the crowded factory and tenements and the tinsel show of the city cannot give. But one must be willing to forego the social and physical display of the surface of things and to choose the better and more substantial part. If we are a people that can do this there is hope for an early and satisfactory solution of the problems of rural life.

The Bright Side of Old-time Country Life.—Even in the country life of twenty-five to fifty years ago, there was a bright and happy side. It was not all dark, and, in its influence for training the youth to a strong manhood, we shall probably not look upon its like again. If strength and welfare rather than pleasure are the chief end of life, many of the experiences which were undoubtedly hardships were blessings in disguise. Every boy had his chores and every girl her household duties to perform. The cows had to be brought home in the evening from the prairie or the woods; they had to be milked and cared for; calves and hogs had to be fed; horses had to be cared for both evening and morning; barns, stables, and sheds had to be looked after. All the animals of the farm, including the domestic fowls, such as chickens, ducks,

and turkeys, became our friends and each was individually known.

Though all the duties of farm life had to be done honestly and well, nevertheless the farmer's boy found time to go fishing and hunting, skating, coasting, and trapping. He learned the ways and the habits of beasts, birds, and fish. He observed the squirrels garnering their winter supply in the fall. He watched the shrewd pocket gopher as it came up and deposited the contents of its cheek pockets upon the pile of fresh dirt beside his hole. He learned how to trap the muskrat, and woe to the raccoon that was discovered stealing the corn, for it was tracked and treed even at midnight. The boy's eyes occasionally caught sight of a red fox or of a deer; and the call of the dove, the drum of the pheasant, the welcome "whip-poor-will" and the "to-whit, to-whit, to-who" of the owl were familiar sounds. He ranged the prairie and the woods; he climbed trees for nuts and for distant views, and knew every hill, valley, and stream for miles and miles around. Even his daily and regular work was of a large and varied kind. It was not like the making of one tenth of a pin, which has a strong tendency to reduce the worker to one tenth of a man.

On the farm one usually begins and finishes a piece of work whether it be a hay-rack or a barn; he sees it through—the whole of it receives expression in him. It is *his* piece of work and it faces him as he has to

face it. The tendency is for both to be "honest." If there were so much brightness and variety in days gone by, when all work was done by hand, how much better the situation can be now and in the future, when inventions and machines have come to the rescue of the laborer, and when the hours of toil have been so materially shortened!

The Larger Environment.—There is no doubt that a large and varied environment is conducive to the growth of a strong and active personality. If one has to adjust himself at every turn to something new, it will lead to self-activity and initiative, to ingenuity and aggressiveness. If tadpoles are reared in jars of different sizes, the growth and size of each will vary with the size of the vessel, the smallest jar growing the smallest tadpole, and the largest jar the largest tadpole. It is fighting against the laws of fate to attempt to rear strong personalities in a "flat" or even in a fifty-foot lot. They need the range of the prairies, the hills, and the woods. Shakespeare was born and brought up in one of the richest and most stimulating environments, natural and social, in the world; and this, no doubt, had much to do with his matchless ability to express himself on all phases of nature and of mind. Large and varied influences, while they do not compel, at least *tend* to produce, large minds; for they leave with us infinite impressions and induce correspondingly varied reactions and experiences. Under such conditions a

child is reacting continually and thus becoming active and efficient. He is challenged at every turn, and if stumbling blocks become stepping stones, the process is the very best kind of education.

Games.—There are excellent opportunities in the country for all kinds of games, for there ample room and many incentives to activity present themselves. In the city, children are often content with seeing experts and professionals give performances or "stunts," while they, themselves, remain passive. In the country there are not so many attractions and distractions —so many dazzling and overwhelmingly "superior" things—that children may not be easily induced to "get into the game" themselves. I fear that in recent years owing to imitation of the city and its life, play and games in the country have become somewhat obsolete. There needs to be a renaissance in this field. We have been offered everywhere in recent years so much of what might be called the "finished product" that the children are content merely to sit around as spectators and watch others give the performances.

As in the case of the rural school the play instincts of country children must be awakened again in behalf of rural life in general. There are scores of games and sports, from marbles to football, which should receive attention. In recent years the social mind, in all sports, seems to be directed to the *result*, the winning or losing, instead of to the game, as a game,

and the fun of it all. True sportsmanship should be revived and cultivated. There is no reason why there should not be found in every neighborhood, and especially at every school center, all kinds of plays and games, each in its own time and place and having its own patronage—marbles, tops, swings, horseshoes, "I spy," anti-over, pull-away, prisoner's base, tennis, croquet, volley ball, basketball, skating, coasting, skiing, baseball, and football. Horizontal bars, turning pole, and other apparatus should be provided in every playground. In the social centers, if the boys can be organized as Boy Scouts, and the girls as Camp-Fire Girls, good results will ensue.

Many more plays and games will suggest themselves, and those for girls should be encouraged as well as those for boys. All the aspects of rural life can thus be made most enjoyable. It is often well to introduce and cultivate one game at a time, letting it run its course, something like a fever, and then, at the psychological moment, introduce and try out another. To introduce too many at one time would not afford an opportunity for children to experience the rise and fall of a wave of enthusiasm on any one, and this is quite important. Usually some direction should be given to play, but this direction should not be suppressive, and should be given by a leader who understands and sympathizes with child nature.

Inventiveness in Rural Life.—In the city, where everything is manufactured or sold ready-made, a

person simply goes to the store and buys whatever he needs. In the country this cannot be done, and one is driven by sheer necessity to devise ways and means of supplying his needs, himself. He simply has to invent or devise a remedy. Necessity is the mother of invention.

It is really better for boys and girls in the country if their parents are compelled to be frugal and economical. If children get anything and everything they wish, merely for the asking, they are undone; they become weak for lack of self-exertion, self-expression, and invention; they become dissatisfied if everything is not coming their way from others. They become selfish and careless. Having tasted of the best, merely for the asking, they become dissatisfied with everything except the best. This is the dominant tendency in the city and wherever parents are foolish enough to satisfy the child's every whim. If the parents carry the child in this manner, the child, in later years, will have weak legs and the parents will have weak backs. Moreover, love and respect move in the direction of activity, and if everything comes the child's way there will be little love, except "cupboard love," going the other way.

It is unfortunate for children to experience the best too early in life; there is then no room for growth and development. It was Professor James who said that the best doll he ever saw was a home-made rag doll; it left sufficient room for the play of the imagina-

tion. With the perfect, factory-made doll there is nothing more for the imagination to do; it is complete, but it is not the little girl who has completed it. In the country, men and women, boys and girls are induced to begin and complete all kinds of things. Many things have to be made outright and most things have to be repaired on the farm. Challenges of this kind to inventiveness and activity are outstanding all the time. Sleds, both large and small, wheelbarrows and hay racks, sheds, granaries, and barns are both made and repaired. But in all there is no mad rush. It is not as it is in the factory or in the sawmill. One is not reduced to the instantaneous reactions of an automaton; he has time to breathe and to think. One can act like a free man rather than like a machine. There is room for thought and for invention.

Activity Rather than Passivity.—In this infinite variety of stimulation and response, the youth is induced to become active rather than passive. While he is not pushed unduly, he is reasonably active during all his waking hours, and the habit of activity, of doing, is ingrained. This is closely related to character and morality, to thrift and success. Such a person is more likely to be a creditor than a debtor to society. In this respect the country and the farm have been the salvation of many a youth.

In the city many children have no regular employment; they have no chores to do and no regular

occupation. Evenings and vacations find them on the streets. Then Satan always finds mischief for idle hands to do. These children become passive except under the impulses of instinct or of mischievous ideas; they have no regular and systematic work to do; everything is done for them. During their early years habits of idleness, of passive receptivity, of mischief, and possibly of crime, are ingrained. And though this kind of life may be more *pleasurable*, in a low sense, than the active life of the country, there can be no doubt as to which is the more wholesome and strengthening.

Child Labor.—A good child-labor law is absolutely essential to the welfare of the children for whom it has been enacted; nevertheless, there has been a great omission in not providing that idle children shall do some work. Even in large cities there are probably more children who do not work enough than there are who are made to work too hard. In our zeal we sometimes forbid children to work, when some work would be the very best thing for them. It is true that on the farm as well as in the factory ignorant and mercenary parents make dollars out of the sweat of their children, when these should be going to school or engaged in physical and mental recreation and development. It is unfortunate that society is not able to see to it, that, as in Plato's Republic, every child and every person engage in the work or study for which he is best fitted, and to the extent that is best for him. Then the

hundreds of thousands of children who are idling would be engaged in some kind of occupation, and those who are working too hard would be given lighter tasks; and all would have the privilege of an appropriate education.

The Finest Life on Earth.—In view of such circumstances and opportunities, life in the country should be, and *could be made*, the best and most complete life possible to a human being. Country life is the best cradle of the race. To have a good home and rear a family in the heart of a great city is well-nigh impossible for the average laboring man. The struggle for existence is too fierce and the opportunity, in childhood and youth, for self-expression and initiative is too meager. The environment is too vast, complex, and overwhelming, with nothing worth while for the child to do. "Individuals may stand, but generations will slip" on such an inclined plane of life. From this point of view it can be truly said, we think, that "God made the country while man made the town."

The real, vital possibilities of country life are without number. The surface attractions of the city are most alluring. A focusing of the public mind upon the problem, its *pros* and *cons*, will, it is to be hoped, turn the scales without delay in favor of country life and its substantial benefits.

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